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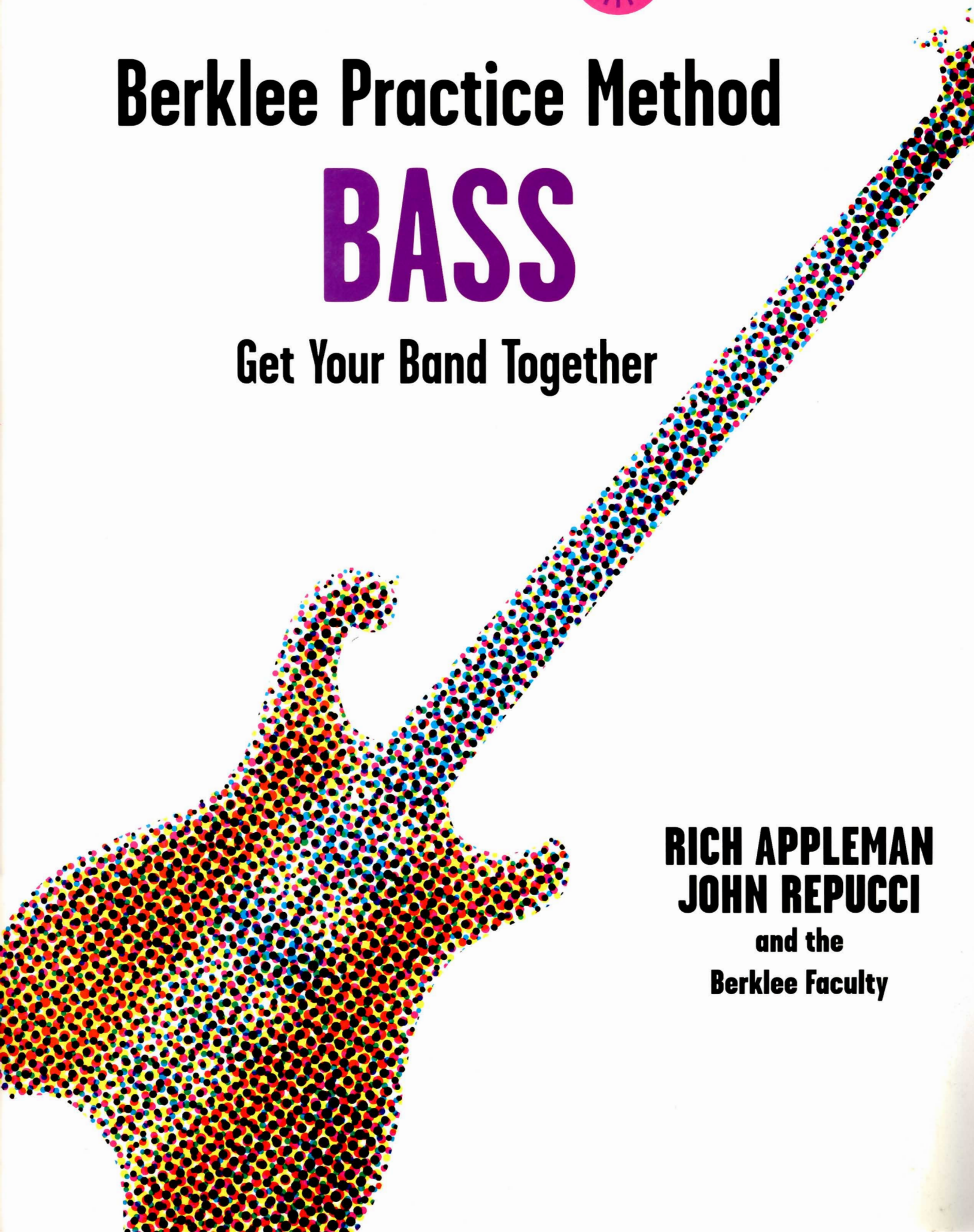
Berklee Practice Method

BASS

Get Your Band Together



RICH APPLEMAN
JOHN REPUCCI
and the
Berklee Faculty

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CD 4. "Sweet" Call/Response 1
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CD 6. "Sweet" You're the Bass
CD 7. "Sweet" First Part
CD 8. "Sweet" Second Part
CD 9. "Sweet" Call/Response 3
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Chapter II. Playing Blues ("Do It Now")

CD 11. "Do It Now" Full Band
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CD 56. "Stop It" Call/Response: Licks

Foreword

Berklee College of Music has been training musicians for over fifty years. Our graduates go onto successful careers in the music business, and many have found their way to the very top of the industry, producing hit records, receiving the highest awards, and sharing their music with millions of people.

An important reason why Berklee is so successful is that our curriculum stresses the practical application of musical principles. Our students spend a lot of time playing together in bands. When you play with other musicians, you learn things that are impossible to learn in any other way. Teachers are invaluable, practicing by yourself is critical, but performing in a band is the most valuable experience of all. That's what is so special about this series: it gives you the theory you need, but also prepares you to play in a band.

The goal of the *Berklee Practice Method* is to present some of Berklee's teaching strategies in book and audio form. The chairs of each of our instrumental departments—guitar, bass, keyboard, percussion, woodwind, brass, string, and voice—have gotten together and discussed the best ways to teach you how to play in a band. They teamed with some of our best faculty and produced a set of books with play-along audio tracks that uniquely prepares its readers to play with other musicians.

Students who want to study at Berklee come from a variety of backgrounds. Some have great technique, but have never improvised. Some have incredible ears, but need more work on their reading skills. Some have a very creative, intuitive sense of music, but their technical skills aren't strong enough, yet, to articulate their ideas.

The *Berklee Practice Method* teaches many of these different aspects of musicianship. It is the material that our faculty wishes all Berklee freshmen could master before arriving on our doorstep.

When you work through this book, don't just read it. You've got to play through every example, along with the recording. Better yet, play them with your own band.

Playing music with other people is how you will learn the most. This series will help you master the skills you need to become a creative, expressive, and supportive musician that anyone would want to have in their band.

Gary Burton
Executive Vice President,
Berklee College of Music

Preface

Thank you for choosing the *Berklee Practice Method* for bass. This book/CD package, developed by the faculty of Berklee College of Music, is part of the *Berklee Practice Method* series—the instrumental method that teaches how to play in a band.

The recording included with this method provides an instant band you can play along with, featuring great players from Berklee's performance faculty. Each tune has exercises and practice tracks that will help prepare you to play it. Rock, blues, and funk are just some of the styles you will perform.

The lessons in this book will guide you through developing reading skills and playing basic grooves, walking bass lines, and other standard bass techniques. This book is for bass players who are just beginning lessons with their teacher, though players learning on their own will also find it invaluable. You should have some knowledge of fingering on the low part of the neck and a sense for how to play the bass notes. These are reviewed in the "Basics" chapter.

Most importantly, you will learn the skills you need to play bass in a band. Play along with the recording, and play with your friends. This series coordinates methods for many different instruments, and all are based on the same tunes, in the same keys. If you know a drummer, guitarist, horn player, etc., have them pick up the *Berklee Practice Method* for their own instruments, and then you can jam together.

Work hard, make music, have fun!

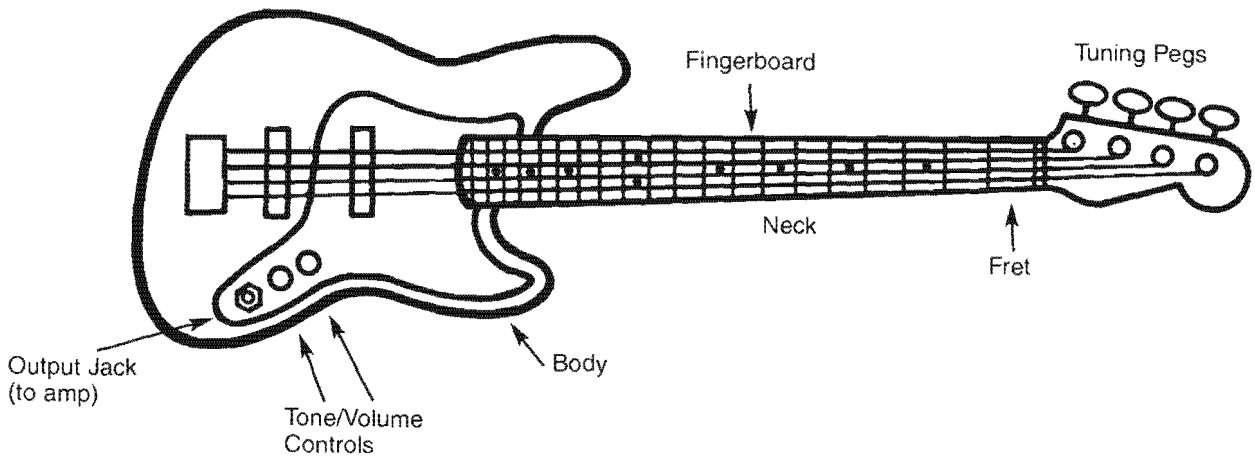
Rich Appleman
Chair of the Bass Department
Berklee College of Music

John Repucci
Assistant Chair of the Bass Department
Berklee College of Music

Basics

Before you start chapter 1, you should understand the following topics.

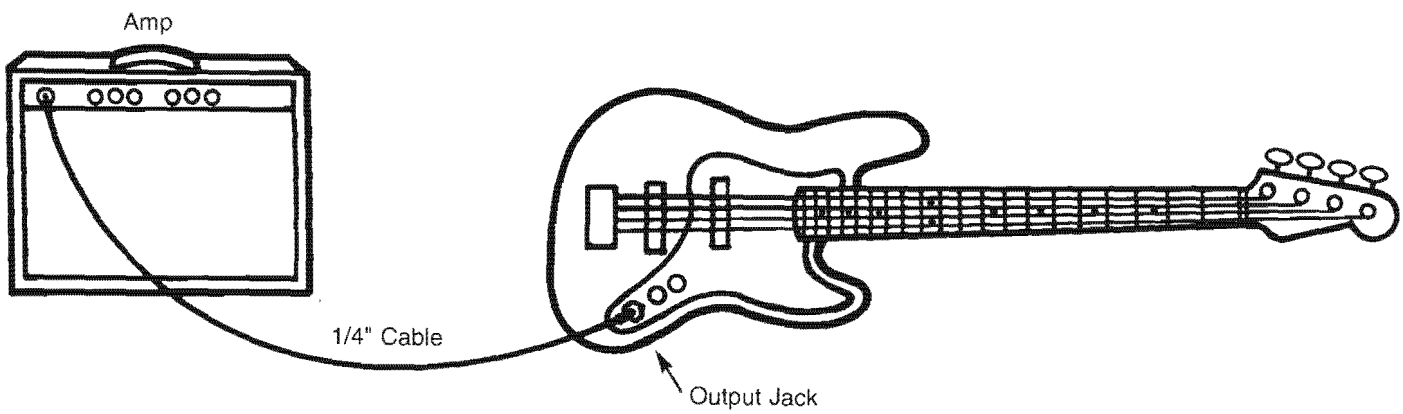
PARTS OF A BASS



PLUGGING IN

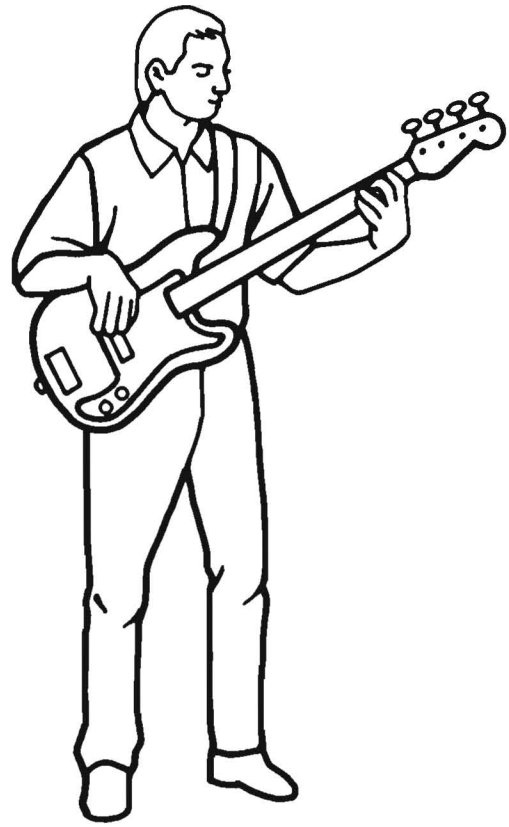
To protect your equipment and your ear drums, follow these steps when you plug into an amp.

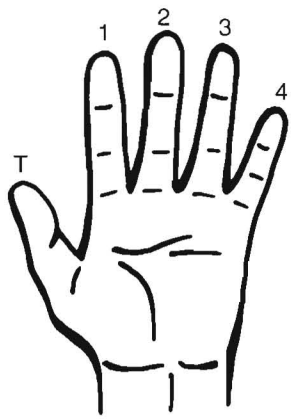
1. Turn off the amp, and set the volume on the amp and the bass down to 0.
2. Plug your 1/4" cable into your bass and then into the amp.
3. Turn on the amp.
4. Turn the bass volume all the way up.
5. Slowly, turn up the amp volume until it is loud enough.

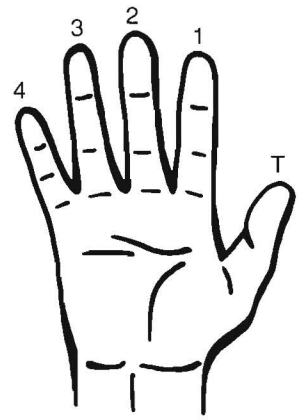


HOLDING THE BASS

Use a strap. Sitting or standing, the bass should always be at the same angle.







HAND

In bass work, fingers are numbered like this.

STRINGS

The traditional bass has four strings—
from lowest to highest sounding: E, A, D, G.

TUNING

Before you play, tune your strings to the right notes. If your string is flat (too loose), tighten its tuning peg to raise the pitch. If your string is sharp (too tight), loosen its tuning peg to lower the pitch. As you get close to the right pitch, listen for *beats* (tiny waves of sound) as you play your note along with the correctly tuned note. Slight differences in pitch causes these audible beats. Keep tuning until you don't hear any beats.

There are many ways to tune. One of the most convenient is using an electric tuner. You can also tune by ear, using this recording.

TUNING TO THE BERKLEE PRACTICE METHOD RECORDING

1. Listen to track 1, "Tuning Note G."

2. Play your G string. Determine whether the pitch of your G string is above or below the recorded pitch. Don't worry if you can't tell, at first. Just try moving the tuning peg slowly, in either direction, until it sounds right.

3. While your string is still sounding its note, turn the G string's tuning peg until it is at the same pitch as the tuning note on the recording. Pluck it again every few seconds to keep it sounding its current pitch, until it is tuned.

4. When this string is tuned, tune the D, A, and E strings to the notes on the recording.

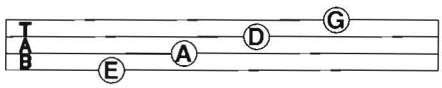
Your bass should now be in tune.

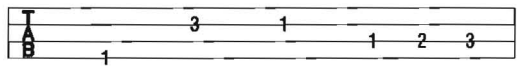
NOTATION

Bass players read two kinds of notation: tablature and traditional notation.

Tablature

Tablature (or "tab") has four lines, one for each string. Fret numbers show which fret you should hold down.





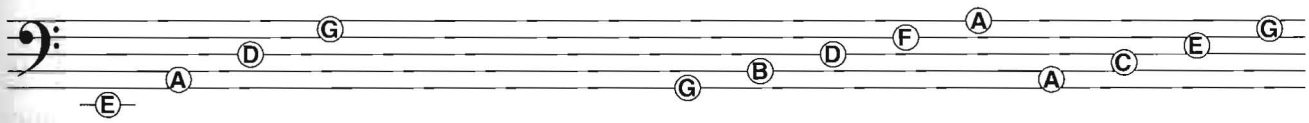
Traditional Notation

Notes are written on a staff.

Bass music is usually written using the "bass clef" staff.

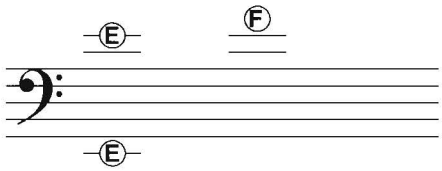
Here are the bass's open strings on the staff.

Here are the notes for all the lines and spaces in bass clef.



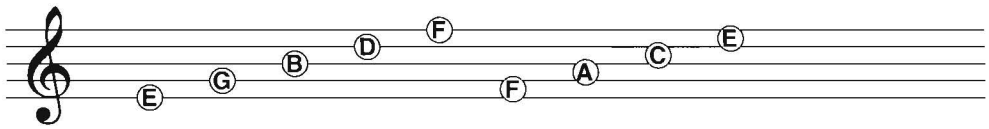
LEDGER LINES

The staff can be extended with ledger lines.



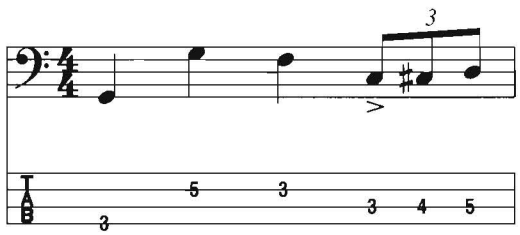
TREBLE CLEF

Some instruments read from treble clef. Here are the notes for the lines and spaces of treble clef.



TABLATURE

Tab often appears beneath regular notation. Read the tab to learn how to finger the note. Read traditional notation to learn the rhythms, note names, and musical nuances.



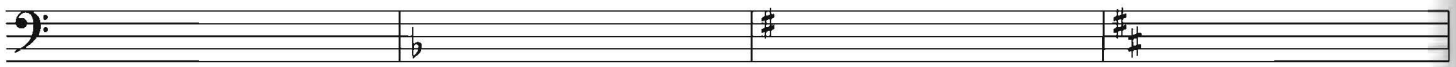
ACCIDENTALS

Accidentals are symbols appearing before notes, showing that a pitch is raised or lowered for the duration of the measure, unless otherwise indicated.

♭	Flat	Next note down (half step, or one fret down)
♯	Sharp	Next note up (half step, or one fret up)
♮	Natural	Cancels a flat or sharp

KEY SIGNATURES

Key signatures indicate a tune's key and show which notes always get sharps or flats. Accidentals on the lines and spaces in the key signature affect those notes throughout the tune unless there is a natural sign. Here are some key signatures used in this book.

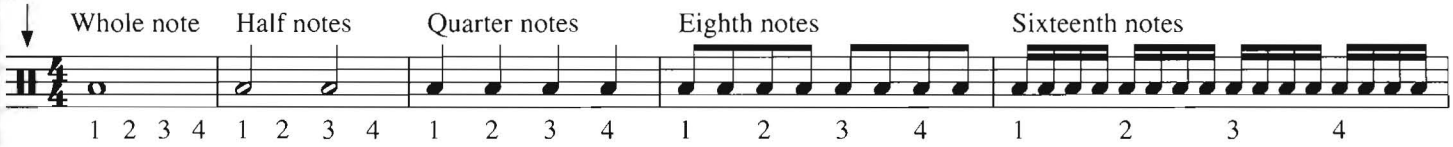


C major A minor	F major D minor	G major E minor	D major B minor

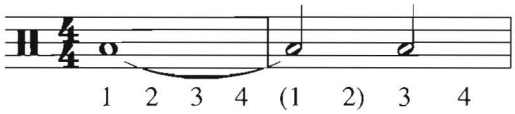
RHYTHMS

Below are the basic rhythms. When there are no actual pitches, as in a clapping exercise, rhythms may be shown on the *percussion clef*. (The beats are numbered below the staff.)

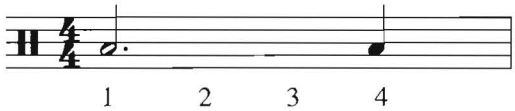
Percussion Clef



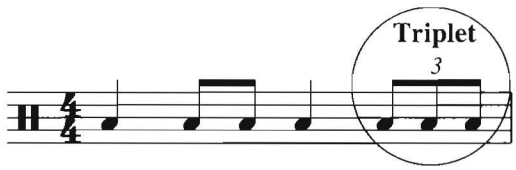
Connect notes using a tie. The first note is held for a total of six beats.



Extend a note's rhythmic value by using a dot. A dot increases the value by one half.

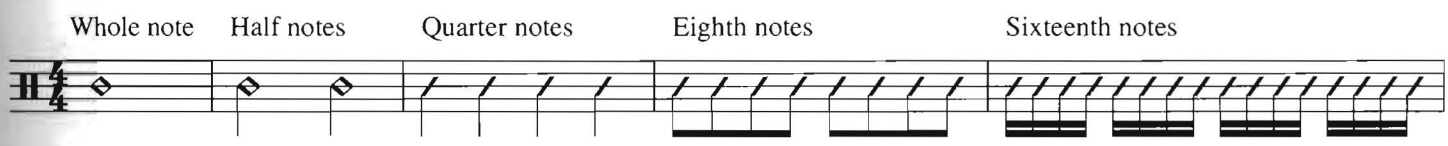


Triplets squeeze three even attacks into the space of two. In this example, the quarter-note beat is divided first into two eighth notes, and then into three eighth-note triplets.



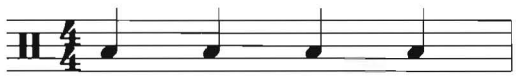
RHYTHMIC NOTATION

Music that just shows rhythms may be written in rhythmic notation. This is common in rhythm exercises, where the emphasis is on rhythm, not on which notes you should play. The stems are the same, but the noteheads are different.

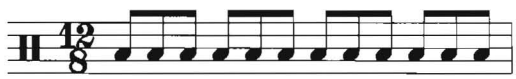


MEASURES

Groups of beats are divided into measures. Measure lengths are shown with *time signatures.*
This measure is in $\frac{4}{4}$ time—there are four quarter notes in the measure.



In $\frac{12}{8}$ time, there are twelve eighth notes per measure.



ARTICULATIONS

Articulations give more information about how to play a note. Here are four common ones used in this book:

>	Accent	Loud
.	Staccato	Short
^	Short Accent	Short and loud
–	Long accent	Hold for full value

Now, let's play!

PLAYING ROCK

CHAPTER 1

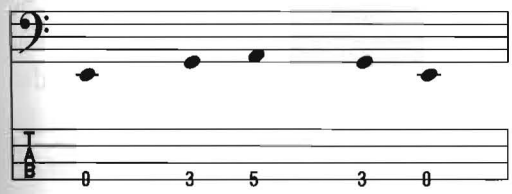
"Sweet" is a *rock* tune. Rock started in the 1960s, and has roots in blues, swing, r&b, and rock 'n' roll. There are many different styles of rock. To hear more rock, listen to artists such as Rage Against the Machine, Melissa Etheridge, Korn, Paula Cole, Bjork, Tori Amos, Primus, Jimi Hendrix, and Led Zeppelin.

LESSON 1
TECHNIQUE/THEORY

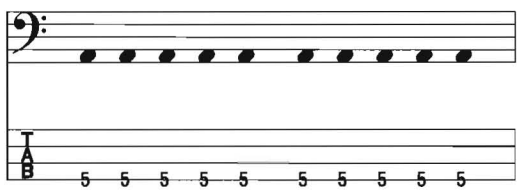
LISTEN 2 PLAY

Listen to "Sweet" on the recording. This tune has two parts. The bass parts are shown below with notes only, no rhythms.

In the first part, the bass plays these notes:



In the second part, the bass plays these notes:



Play along with the recording and try to match the bass. Notice that there is a short introduction before the first part begins.

BASS LINES

Groups of notes like those you just played are often called *licks*—short, often improvised, melodic figures or phrases.

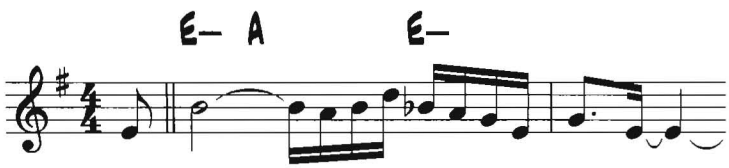
In "Sweet," and in many other tunes, the bass repeats one or two licks over and over. When a lick is repeated like this, it is called a *riff.*

In "Sweet," the bass plays a riff and the other instruments play other kinds of parts. The parts all sound good together because they are based on the same *chords* (three or more notes sounded together).

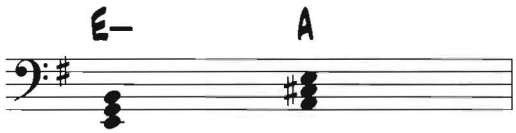
LEAD SHEETS

The bass's job is to ground the chords for the whole band. To create a good bass line, you need to know the tune's chords. Look at the tune's *lead sheet* (sometimes called a "chart") to learn which chords to use.

Lead sheet notation looks like this:



The chord symbols above the melody tell everyone which chords they should play. The first part of "Sweet" is based on two chords: E minor (E–) and A major (A).

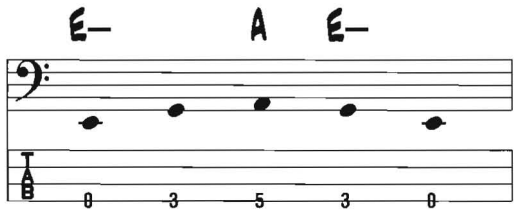


PERFORMANCE TIP

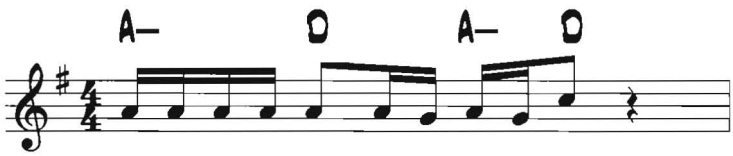
Chord symbols don't specify any rhythms. They don't even tell you exactly what notes to play. They just tell you that the band will play an E minor chord with that melody. You can play any notes, as long as your part fits in, or *hooks up*, with what the rest of the band is playing.

Different bass players will create different parts to the same tune. This is one of the coolest things about lead-sheet notation: it leaves room for individual interpretation.

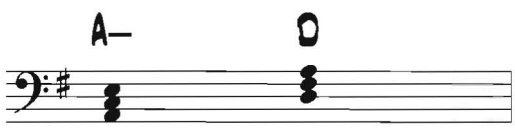
Bass lines usually start with the bottom chord note, or the *root*, especially on the first beat of each measure. In the first lick of "Sweet," the notes E and A are the most important. They are the root notes of the chords E minor and A major. The note G is in the E minor chord, and it connects the two chords.



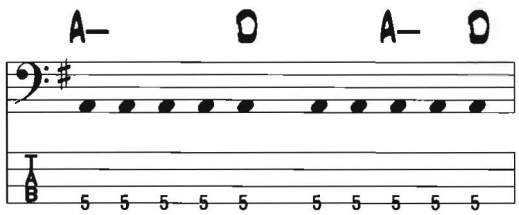
Here is what the lead sheet looks like for the second part of "Sweet."



As you can see, there are two more chords here: A minor (A–) and D major (D).



The second bass lick uses the note A, which is in both these chords. It has the same rhythm as the melody.



LISTEN 3 PLAY

Play "Sweet" along with the recording and listen for the chord changes. Notice how the bass notes sound with the chords played by the other instruments.

LESSON 2
LEARNING THE GROOVE

WHAT IS A GROOVE?

A *groove* is a combination of musical patterns in which everyone in the band feels and plays to a common pulse. This creates a sense of unity and momentum. The *rhythm section* (usually drums, bass, guitar, and keyboard) lays down the groove's dynamic and rhythmic feel. A singer or soloist also contributes to the groove, and performs the melody based on this feel.

LISTEN 2 PLAY

Listen to "Sweet." As is common in hard rock, the groove to "Sweet" has a strong, clear pulse, and a loud, forceful sound. The drums play a heavy, repetitive beat. The bass outlines the harmonic structure. The guitar and keyboards play chords. Everyone uses the same rhythms, though often at different times. This makes the whole band sound like one unit, or *hooked up* with the groove.

Hear how the bass riff hooks up with the drums, especially the bass drum and hi-hat. When do they play the same rhythm? Does the bass hook up with a different drum or cymbal in the first part and in the second part?

Notice the strong quarter-note pulse (also played by the clicks at the start of the track). Hear the bass drum on beats 1 and 3, and the strong snare-drum backbeat on beats 2 and 4. Together, they provide a basic rhythmic "cushion" for the bass to fit into comfortably.

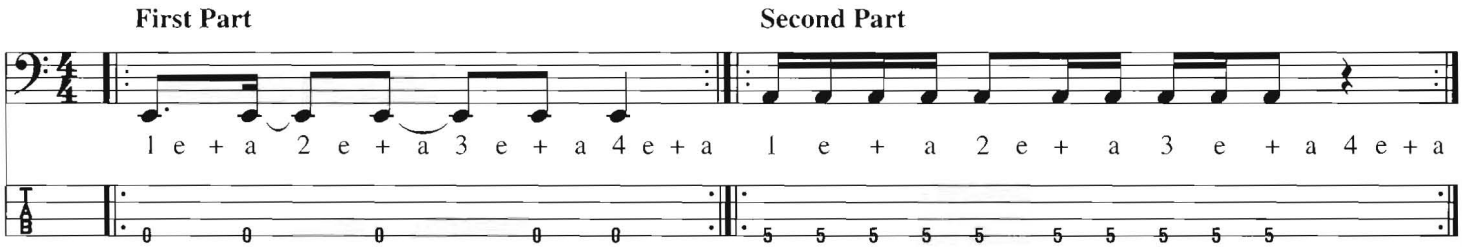
Smaller divisions of the beat—eighth and sixteenth notes—are played on various cymbals. The rest of the band picks up on these rhythms too. The smallest division of the beats in "Sweet" is sixteenth notes, and so we can say the groove has a *sixteenth-note feel.*

Listen again to "Sweet" and count the beats and subdivisions along with the recording (say "and" for "+"):

LISTEN 3 PLAY

1. Quarter notes: **1** **2** **3** **4**
2. Eighth notes: **1** + **2** + **3** + **4** +
3. Sixteenth notes: **1** e + a **2** e + a **3** e + a **4** e + a

The bass line has elements of all of these. Count out the subdivisions as you play the bass lines, accenting the syllable when you play a note.



PERFORMANCE TIP

Practice slowly at first. Practice difficult parts, like the first beat of the first riff, over and over, saying "1 e + a 1 e + a 1 e + a . . ." ("ee-and-uh") until you get it. When you can perform every beat correctly, increase the tempo. Keep increasing it gradually until you are at the same tempo as the recording. Musicians—even pros at the highest levels—do this all the time, behind the scenes. It's a great way to learn to play rhythms very accurately, and will help you hook up tightly with your band.

When you listen to "Sweet," count the subdivisions. Hear the rhythms played by all the other instruments, and notice where they hook up with the bass. When you play—especially when you play in a live band—careful listening will help you hook up with the other instruments, and your whole band will sound better.

LESSON 3
IMPROVISATION

Improvisation means creating your part as you play. Bass lines are often improvised. Though an improvised solo may seem spontaneous to the audience, the musician probably did a lot of preparation before performing it. There are two things you must know before you start improvising: when you should play, and what notes will sound good. By choosing notes from the scale, chords, and melody of the tune, you will improvise a good bass line. The first step is to know the tune.

FORM AND ARRANGEMENT

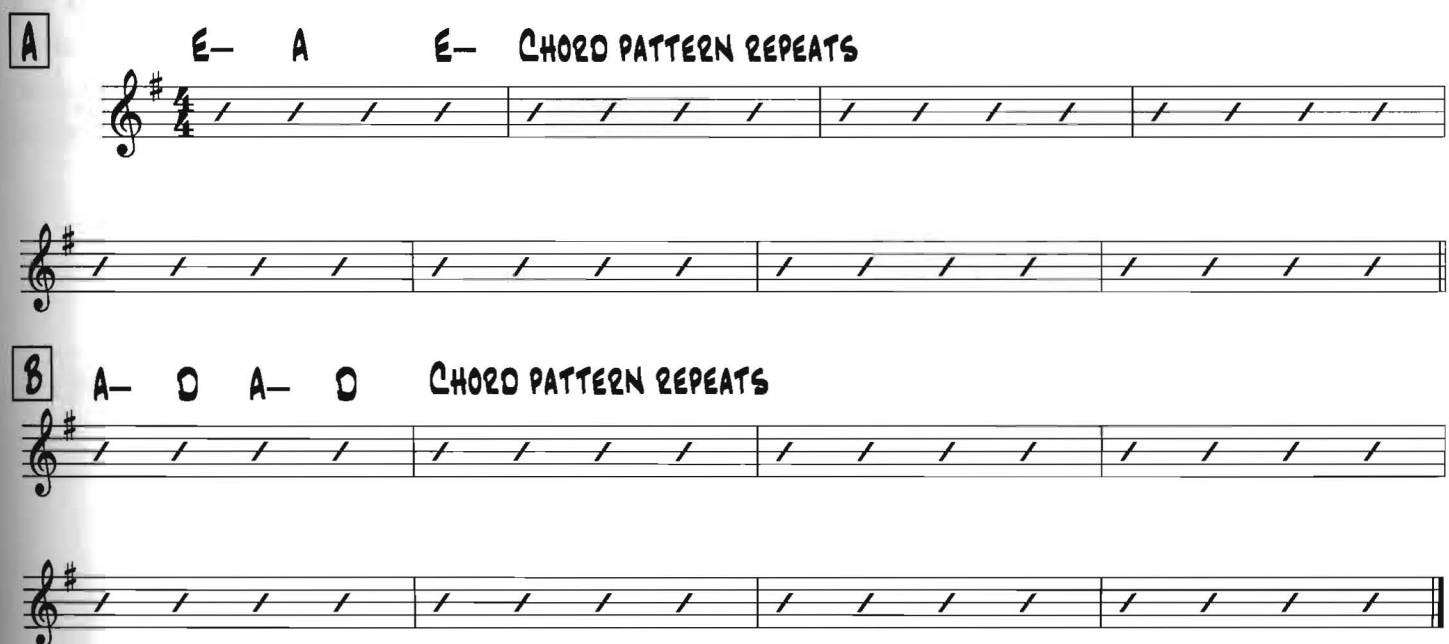
When you are preparing to improvise on a tune, start by learning how it is organized. You have to know where you are in the tune so that you can choose notes that sound good with the band. This will also help you keep your place—especially when you are accompanying a soloist's improvisation, and nobody is playing the written melody.

LISTEN 2 PLAY

Listen to "Sweet" and follow the saxophone. After an introduction, the sax plays the melody. Then, it improvises a solo. Finally, it plays the melody again.

During the improvised solo, you can still feel the written melody. That's because the improvisation follows the same chords as the written melody. This repeating chord pattern is the same throughout the entire tune, and is called the song's *form*—its plan or structure.

A common way to show this organization is with a *chord chart*. Chord charts don't show rhythm or pitch, only measures and chord symbols. The slash marks (**/ / / /**) mean "play in time."



The chord chart makes it easy to see that the form of "Sweet" is sixteen measures long. It has two primary musical ideas: the first eight measures present the first idea (Idea "A"), with the E– A E– patterns. The second eight measures present the second idea (Idea "B"), with the A– D A– D patterns. This form can be described simply as "AB" or "AB form." These letters help us remember the form, freeing us from having to read while we're performing.

One complete repetition of this form is called a *chorus*. A chorus can feature the written melody, in which case it is called the *head*, or it can feature just the chord structure, supporting an improvisation. (The word *chorus* is also used to mean a song section that is alternated with varying verses. In this book, however, the word "chorus" is only used to mean "once through the form.")

ARRANGING "SWEET"

Your band can choose how many choruses you want to play, and create your own *arrangement* of "Sweet." The number of choruses depends on how many players will improvise when you perform the tune. On the recorded performance of "Sweet," only one player solos (the sax), playing for two choruses. Often, several members of the band will take turns playing choruses of improvised solos. A solo can be one or two choruses, or even more.

On the recording, the same basic arrangement is used for all the tunes: the head, an improvised sax solo, and then the head again. Many tunes also include short introductions or endings.

Listen to "Sweet" and follow the arrangement. This is the arrangement for "Sweet" played on the recording:

LISTEN 2 PLAY

Intro	Head	Sax Solo: 2x	Head	Ending
4 Measures	1 Chorus = 16 Measures	1 Chorus = 16 Measures	1 Chorus = 16 Measures	2 Measures

When you play "Sweet" with your band, you can play your own arrangement, adding extra solo choruses, different endings, or other changes.

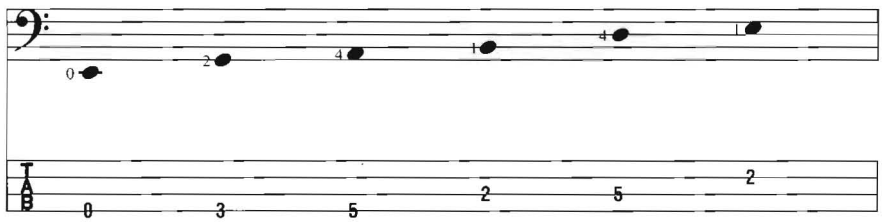
IDEAS FOR IMPROVISING

When you improvise, some notes will sound better than others. There are many ways to find notes that will sound good. You can use the notes from the tune's melody, you can use notes from the chords, and you can use notes from scales that match the tune. Eventually, this becomes intuitive, and you can just follow your ear.

Pentatonic Scales

The melodies to each section of "Sweet" use only five notes. Earlier, we saw how to create the bass line using the chord symbols. Another way to create the bass line is by using a scale—the same scale as the one used to create the melody.

Five-note—or *pentatonic*—scales are among the simplest and most versatile types of scales in all of music. There are two common types of pentatonic scales. For "Sweet," we'll use the *minor pentatonic scale* built on E:



The magic of the minor pentatonic scale is that nearly any series or combination of its notes sounds musically pleasing. It is easy to improvise pentatonic licks that sound good.

CALL AND RESPONSE

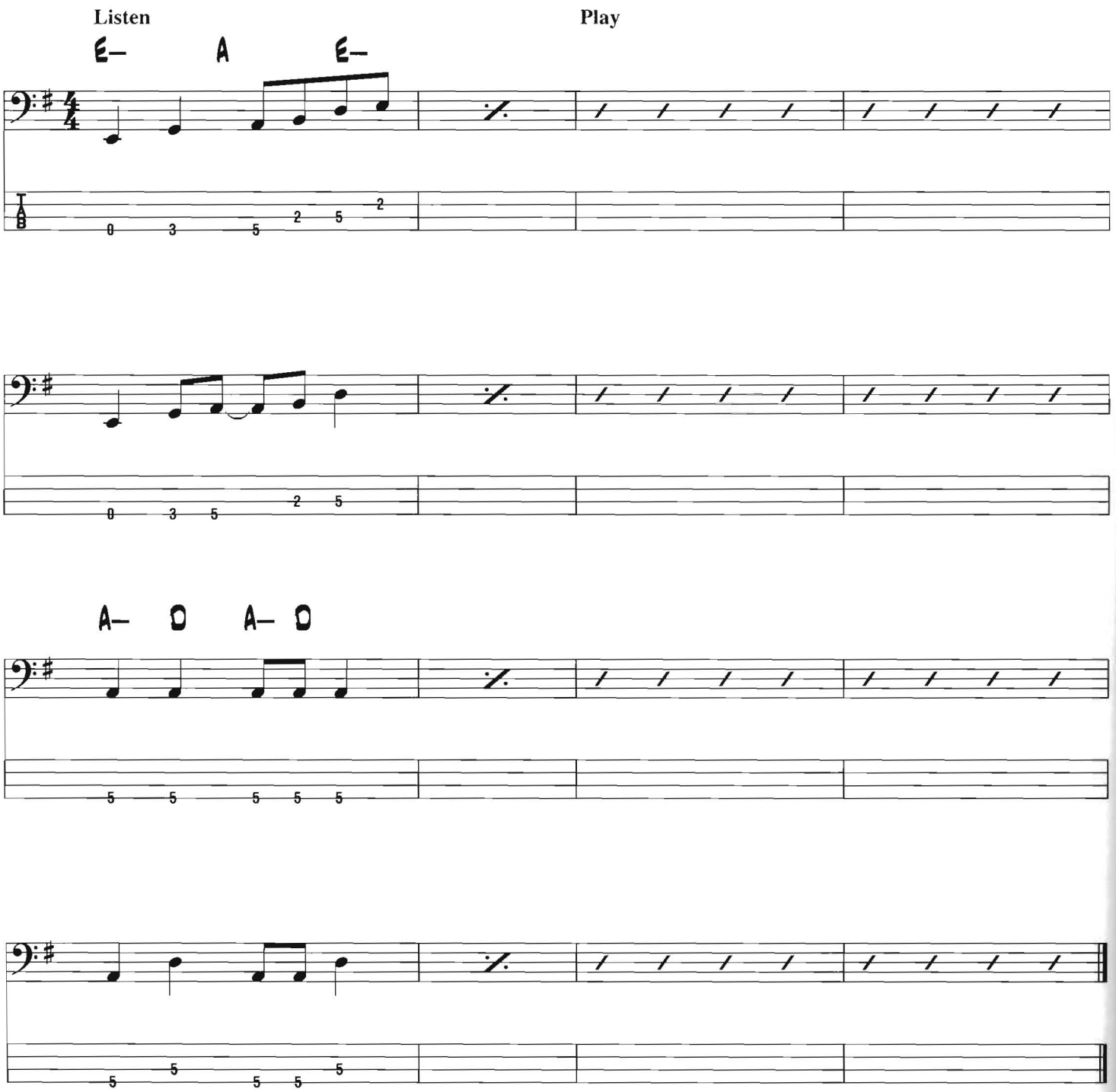
Echo

Listen to each lick and then play it back. Don't read along with the recorded part—just follow your ear. Each two-bar lick comes from the minor pentatonic scale. Follow the form and capture the rhythmic quality of the line being played. Listen carefully and hook up with the groove.

This exercise will help you practice hooking up with a band, and give you ideas for some other bass lines you might use with "Sweet." You and the recording will alternate playing licks that use notes from the E minor pentatonic scale.

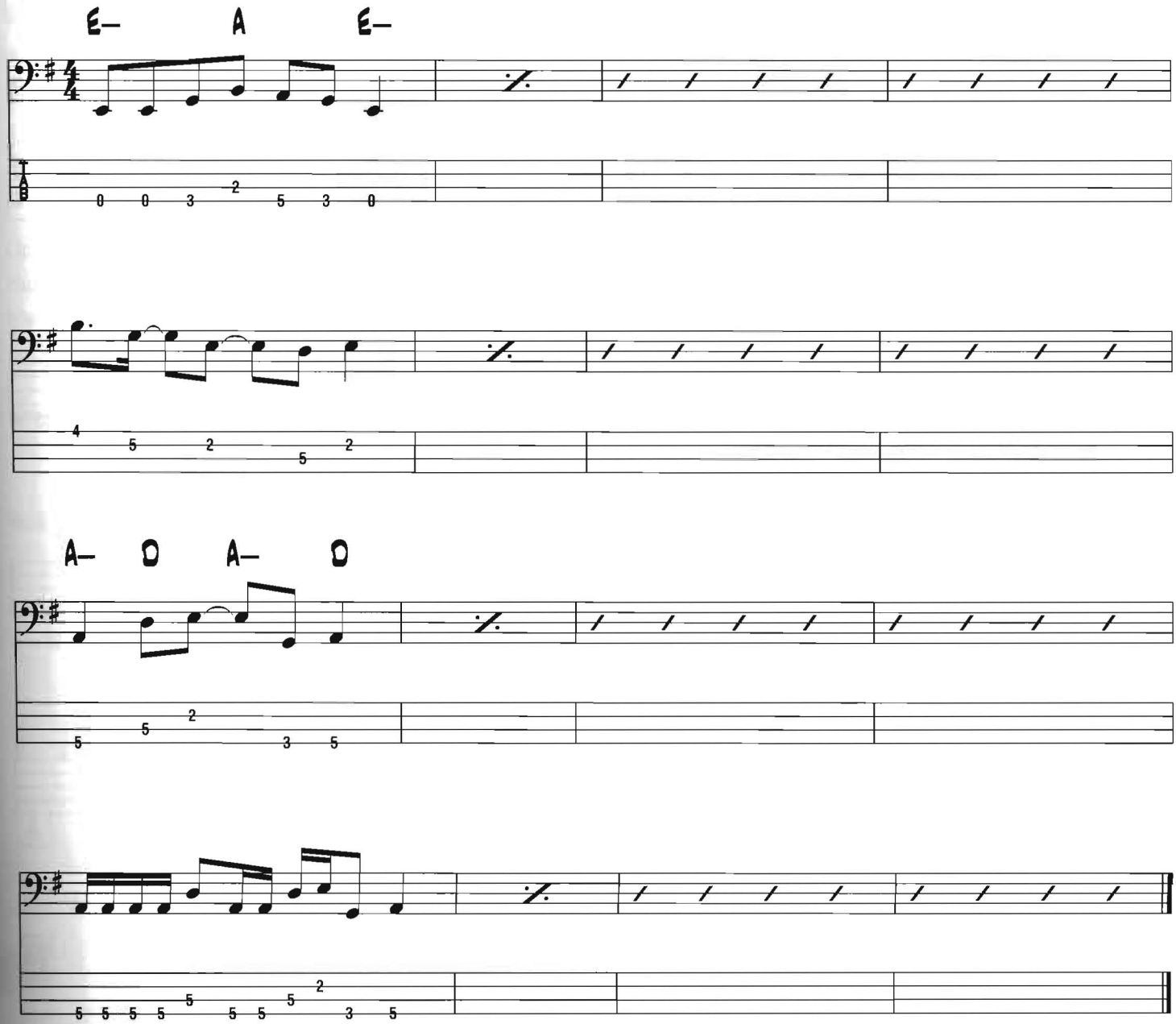
Slashes ("/") in measures marked "play" mean that you should play during those measures. The symbol means "repeat the previous measure."

LISTEN 4 PLAY



Keep practicing track 4 until you can echo all phrases perfectly. Then do the same thing for the phrases on track 5.

LISTEN **5** PLAY

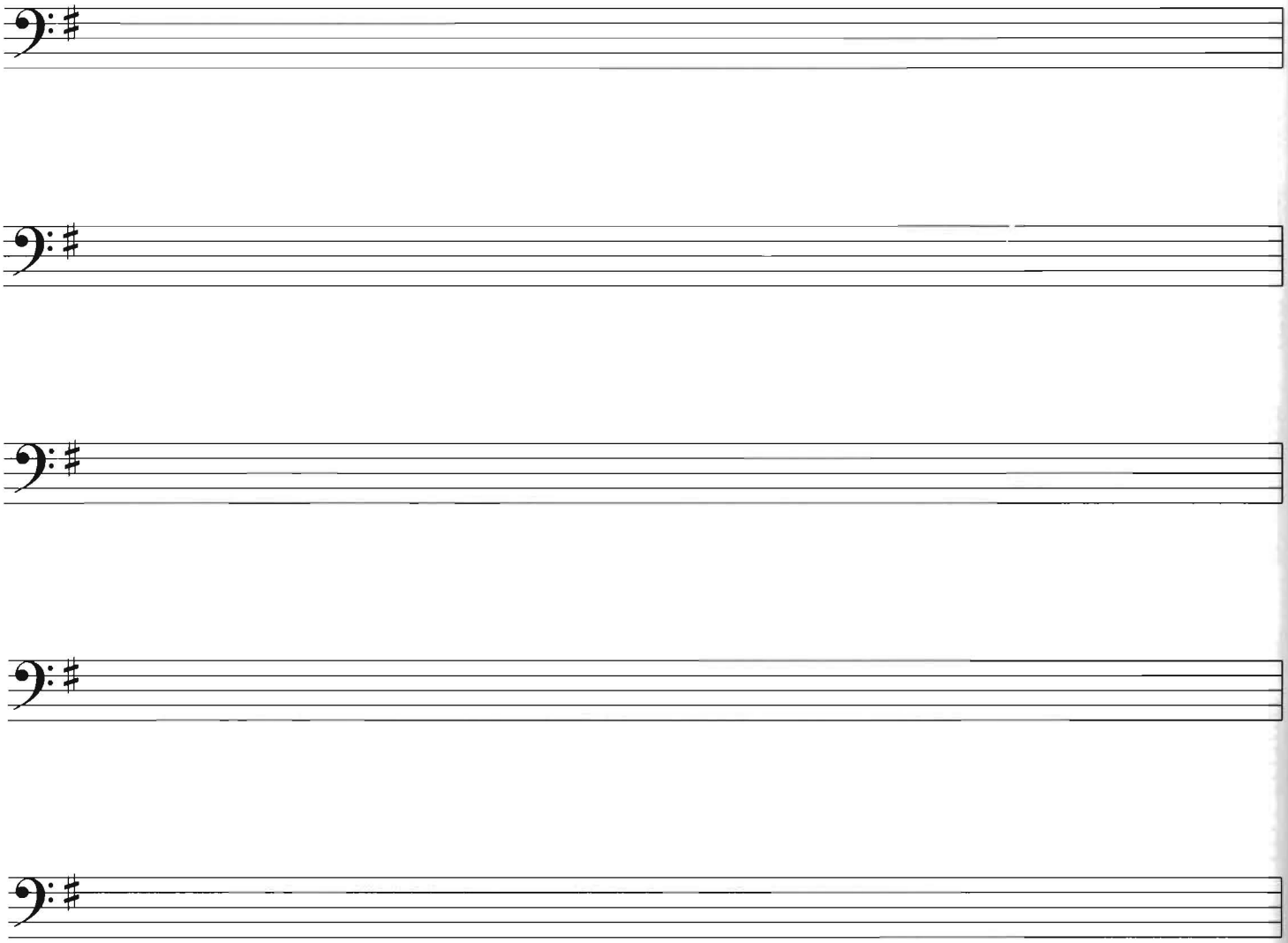


Answer

LISTEN **4,5** PLAY

Play the same two tracks again. This time, instead of echoing exact responses, answer them with your own improvised licks. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of each one, and only use notes of the E minor pentatonic scale.

Write out some of your own ideas for bass lines, using any of the techniques you have learned. Don't worry about perfecting your notation; just sketch out your ideas. This will help you remember your licks when you are improvising.



LISTEN 6 PLAY

Create your own bass part using any of the riffs you just played, and practice your part along with the recording. Play just one riff on each section (A and B) of the form, but choose a different pair of riffs for each chorus.

PLAY IN A BAND TIP

When playing in a band, listen to the other players' parts and try to create a musical conversation. This makes playing much more fun, and more musical too. When you are improvising a solo, listen to what the other instruments are playing. They will suggest many ideas that you can use in your solo, and you will inspire each other.

LESSON 4
READING

When you play in a band, sometimes, you will get a bass part for the tune that shows exactly what you should play. Other times, you will get a lead sheet, giving you more freedom to create your own part. You should be able to play from either one.

BASS PART

On the next page is the bass part to "Sweet." Above the bass line is a smaller staff that shows the melody and chord symbols. Some bass parts show the melody, but often they do not. Notice that there is no tab under the bass part. Tab is mostly used in songbooks and in teaching methods, but very rarely on actual gigs. Practice reading regular notation. That is what you will see most often.

Intro Introduction. The written part begins with an introduction, which is made up of four measures of the B section.

Hard Rock Style indication. This tune is hard rock, and you should play it in that style: heavy bass, strong beat, sixteenth-note feel, and other elements typical of that hard-edged sound.

♩ = 86 Metronome marking. This tells you how fast you should play this tune. If you have a metronome, set it to 86, and play "Sweet" at that tempo.

Repeat signs. Play the music between these signs twice (or more).

Rehearsal letter. These are different than form letters, which you saw in lesson 3. These letters help you when you are practicing with other musicians because everyone's parts have the same letters marked at the same places.

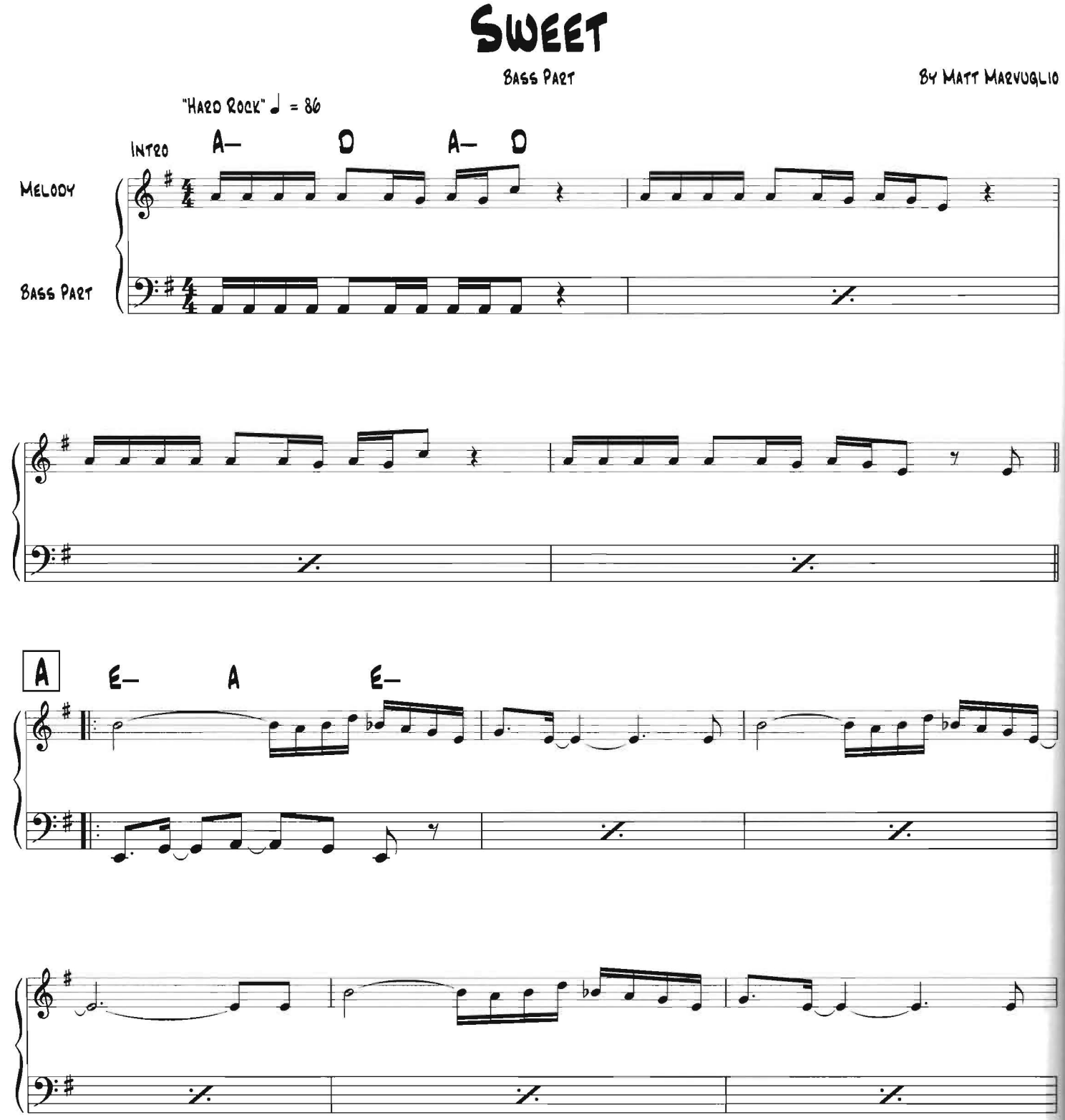
Rehearsal letter with measure number. These mark different areas within a chorus. Again, this can be helpful during rehearsals.

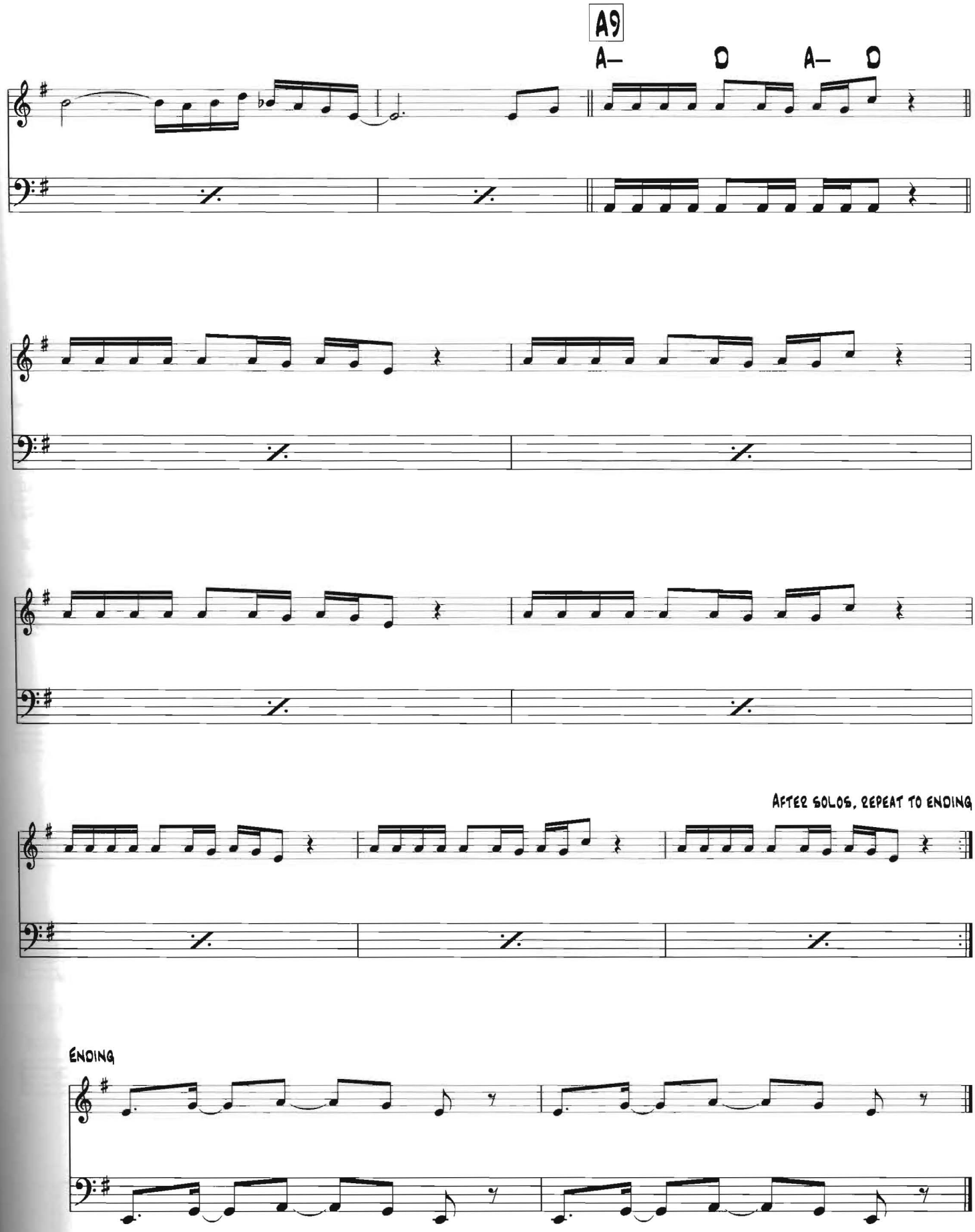
After solos, Repeat to Ending
When the soloists are finished, play the head one more time, and then proceed to the measures marked "Ending."

Ending A final section that is added to the form. End the tune with these measures.

Play "Sweet" along with the recording. Follow the bass part exactly as it is written.

LISTEN 6 PLAY



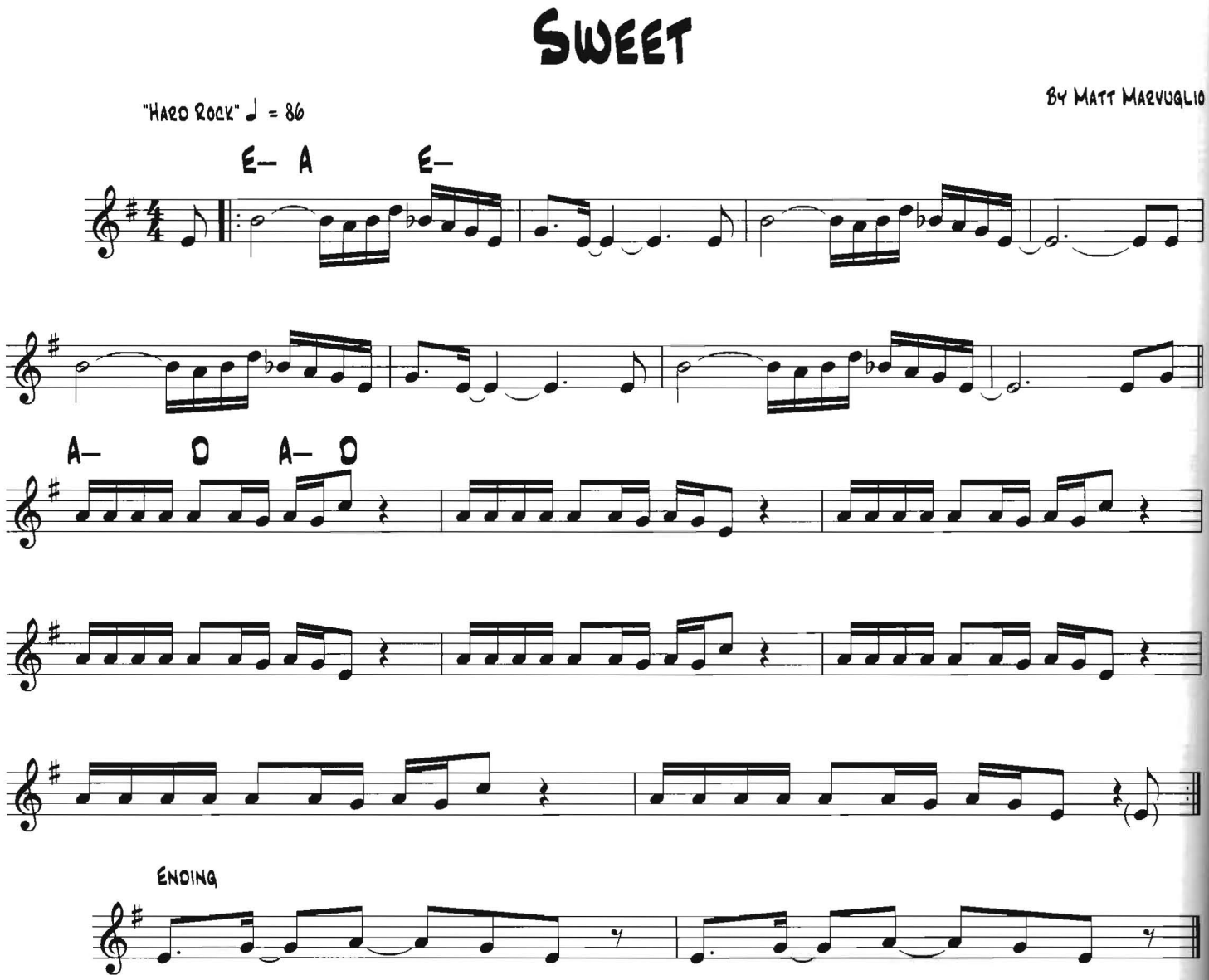

A9
A–
D
A–
D
After solos, repeat to ending
Ending

LEAD SHEET

Lead sheets present the chords and melody, written in treble clef. Lead sheets give you more interpretive freedom than full bass parts do. Notice that there is no written introduction on this lead sheet. The introduction you hear in the recording is an interpretation of the lead sheet by that band. Your band should create your own unique arrangement.

Play "Sweet" along with the recording. Follow the lead sheet, and use your own bass line.

LISTEN 6 PLAY



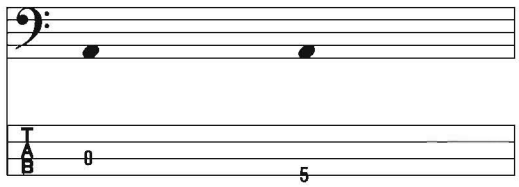
PLAY IN A BAND TIP

While you play, follow the lead sheet. It will help you keep your place in the form.

CHAPTER 1
DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE

POSITION PLAYING

On the bass, you can play a single note in more than one way. For example, in "Sweet," you might play the note A on either of two strings:



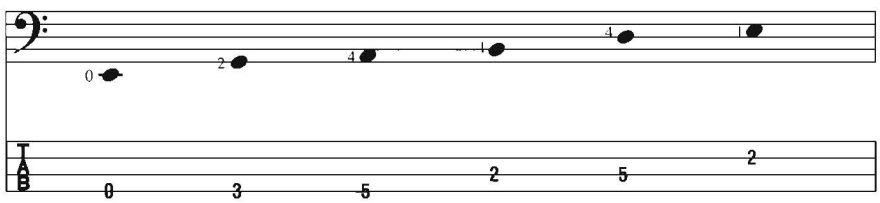
Play these two fingerings for the note "A" and hear how differently they sound. In rock music, it is common to play actively on the E string, moving your hand up and down the neck as needed. The E string's big sound works well for licks such as the first one of "Sweet." Sometimes, though, a lick will be faster, or have bigger leaps. Then, you can play some notes on other strings, which will allow you to move your hand less. This is called *position playing*.

PRACTICE TIP

Choosing the right string helps you avoid open strings, which bass players often prefer when playing rock. Open strings are less easily controlled than fingered strings. It is more difficult to stop them from ringing. They also have a different sound, and tend to stick out against fingered notes. Some special effects, such as vibrato or bends, are impossible on open-string notes. Of course, sometimes you'll want their unique sound, and there is no other way to play a low E besides open. But it is generally a good idea to find another way of playing the other open-string notes.

Positions are named for the fret where the *first finger* is located. When your first finger is at the first fret, then your hand is in the *first position*. When your first finger is at the second fret, your hand is in *second position.*

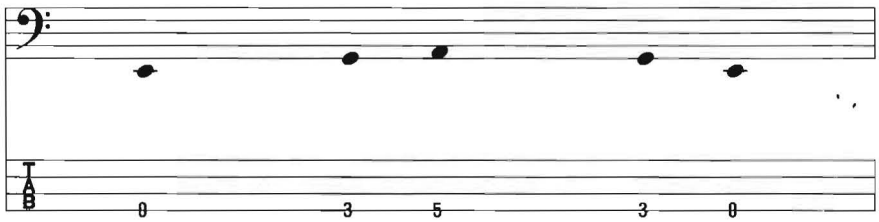
The E minor pentatonic scale can be played in *second position* using three strings: E, A, and D. Practice this scale using the fingering as shown:



The first three notes of the scale are the notes for "Sweet." Play the two "Sweet" licks in second position, using only the E string. This fingering also will help you play other licks, so try some of the other licks you learned earlier in this chapter.

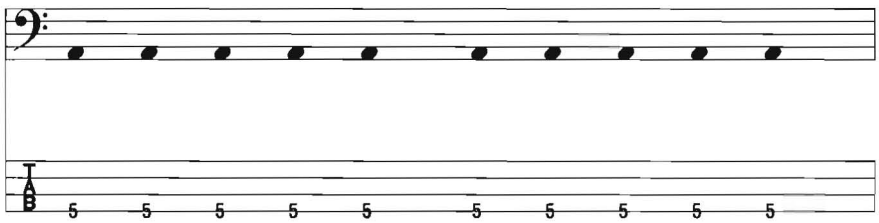
Play along with "Sweet First Part" with your hand in second position. Remember that your first finger is on the second fret, your second finger on the third fret, and your fourth finger on the fifth fret. The first note, E, is an open string note.

LISTEN 7 PLAY

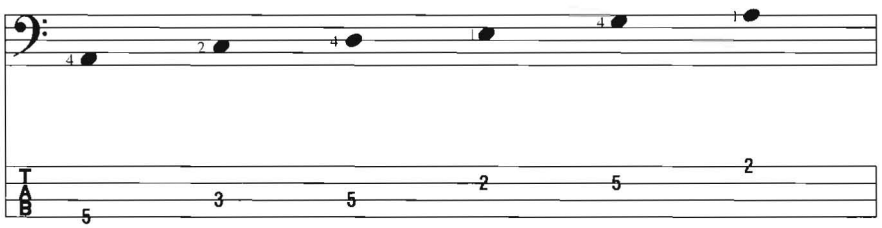


Play along with "Sweet Second Part," keeping your hand in second position, playing the note A on the fifth fret of the E string.

LISTEN 8 PLAY

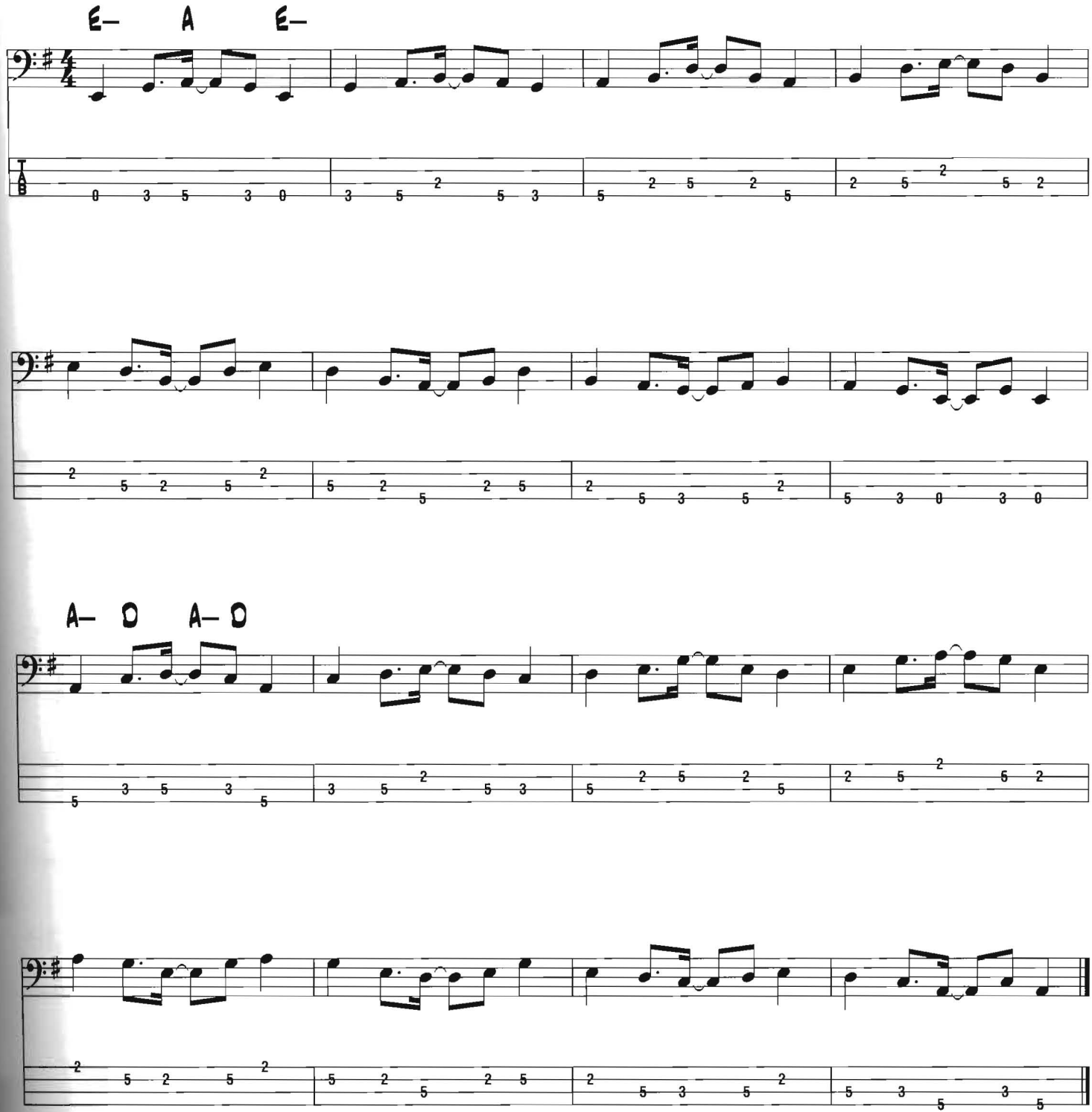


You can also play the A minor pentatonic scale in second position, using the same fingering as you used for E minor pentatonic:



Practice this scale exercise along with "Sweet." Choose the positions that feel most comfortable.

LISTEN 6 PLAY



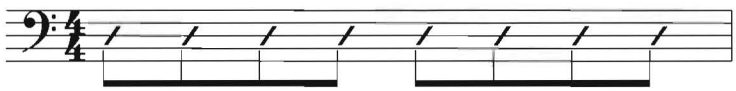
HOOKING UP

This exercise will help you hook up with the drums. Bass and drums should hook up so tightly that they sound like one instrument.

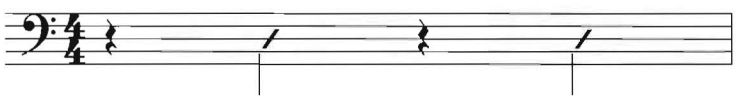
LISTEN 7 PLAY

Listen to "Sweet First Part." As you listen, add the following, one by one:

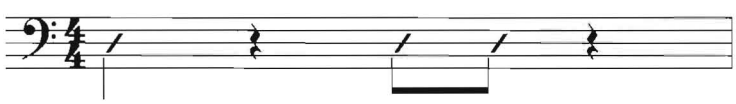
1. Tap your right hand on a table along with the eighth notes played by the hi-hat (or other cymbal).



2. With your left hand, slap your thigh along with the backbeat quarter notes (on beats 2 and 4). This part is played by the snare drum.

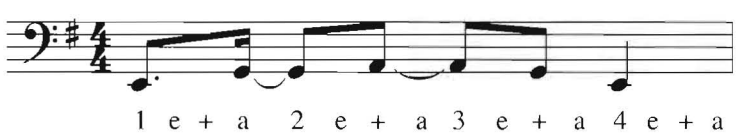


3. Tap your foot along with the bass drum on beats 1 and 3.



CHALLENGE

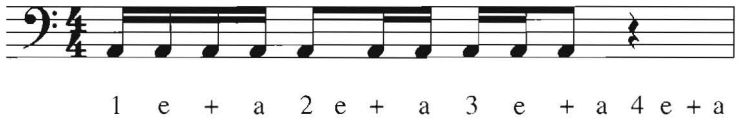
4. Once you can do the first three steps at the same time, sing the first "Sweet" bass riff (using the syllables "doo" or "la"). Add the first three steps, one at a time. If this is difficult for you, try it more slowly, without the recording, at first.



LISTEN 8 PLAY

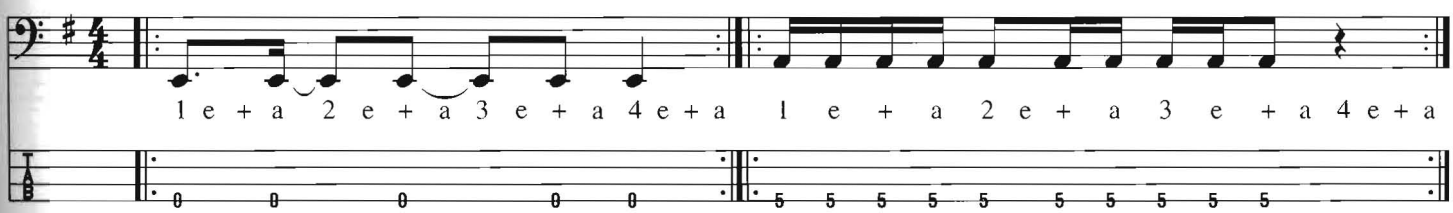
Listen to the second part to "Sweet." Follow the same steps, but this time, tap sixteenth notes along with the cymbal part.

Then sing the second riff along with the rest.



With your bass, play the rhythms for each lick on a single note: E for the A section, and A for the B section. Sing the riff while you practice. This will really lock the riffs into your ear.

LISTEN 6 PLAY

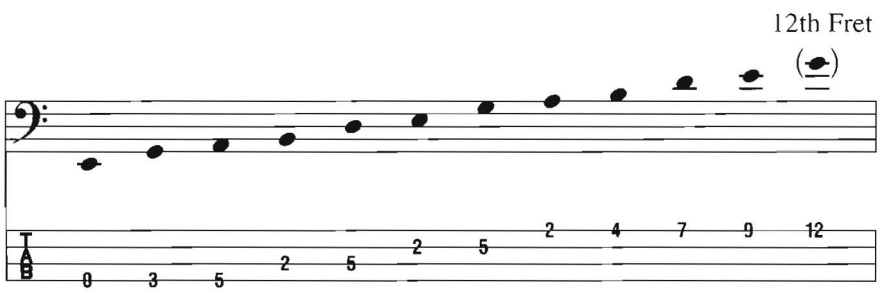


LISTEN 6 PLAY

Finally, play the written part to "Sweet." Practice hooking up with the drum beat.

SCALE: E MINOR PENTATONIC

Practice the E minor pentatonic scale in two octaves.

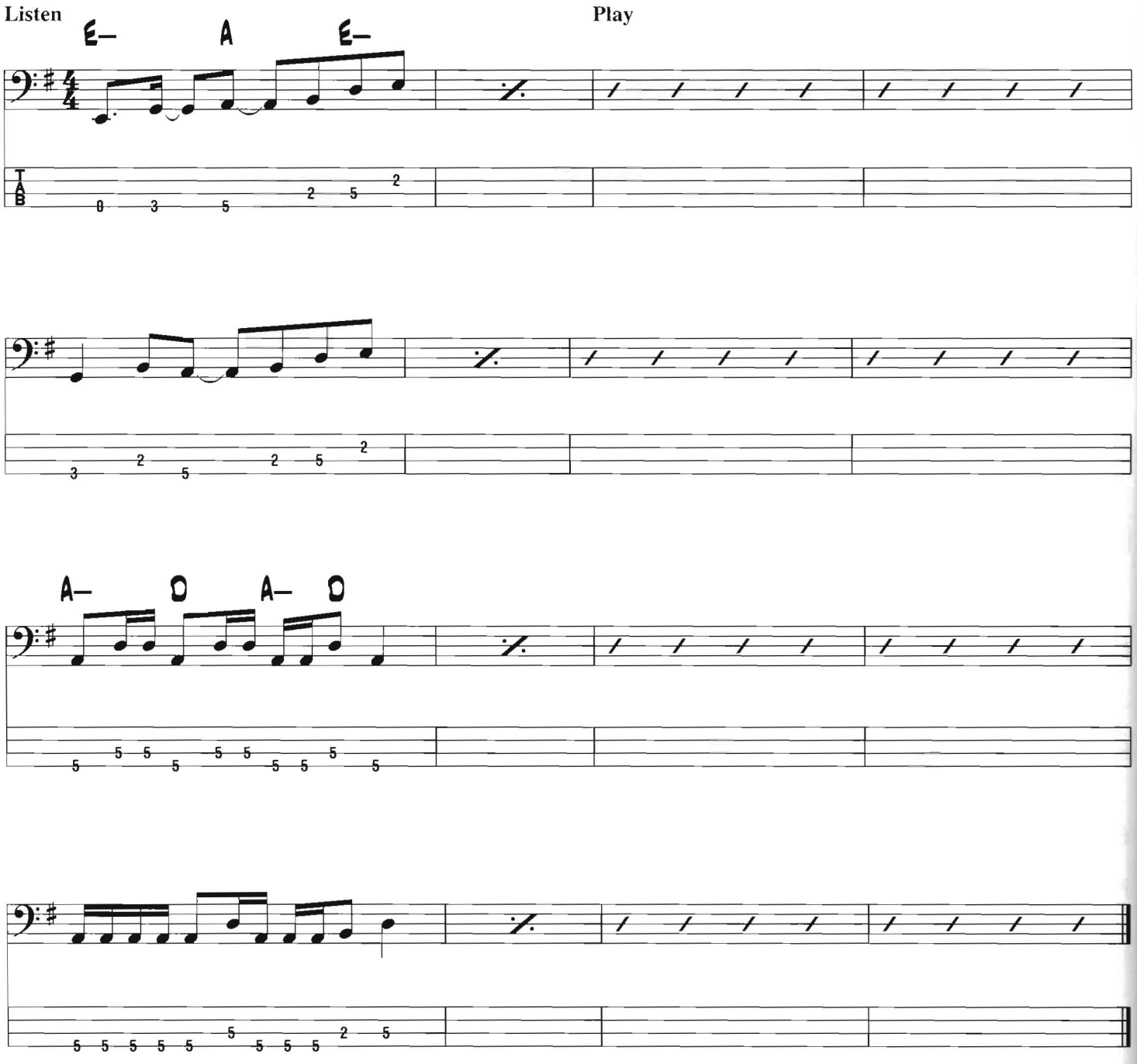


CALL AND RESPONSE

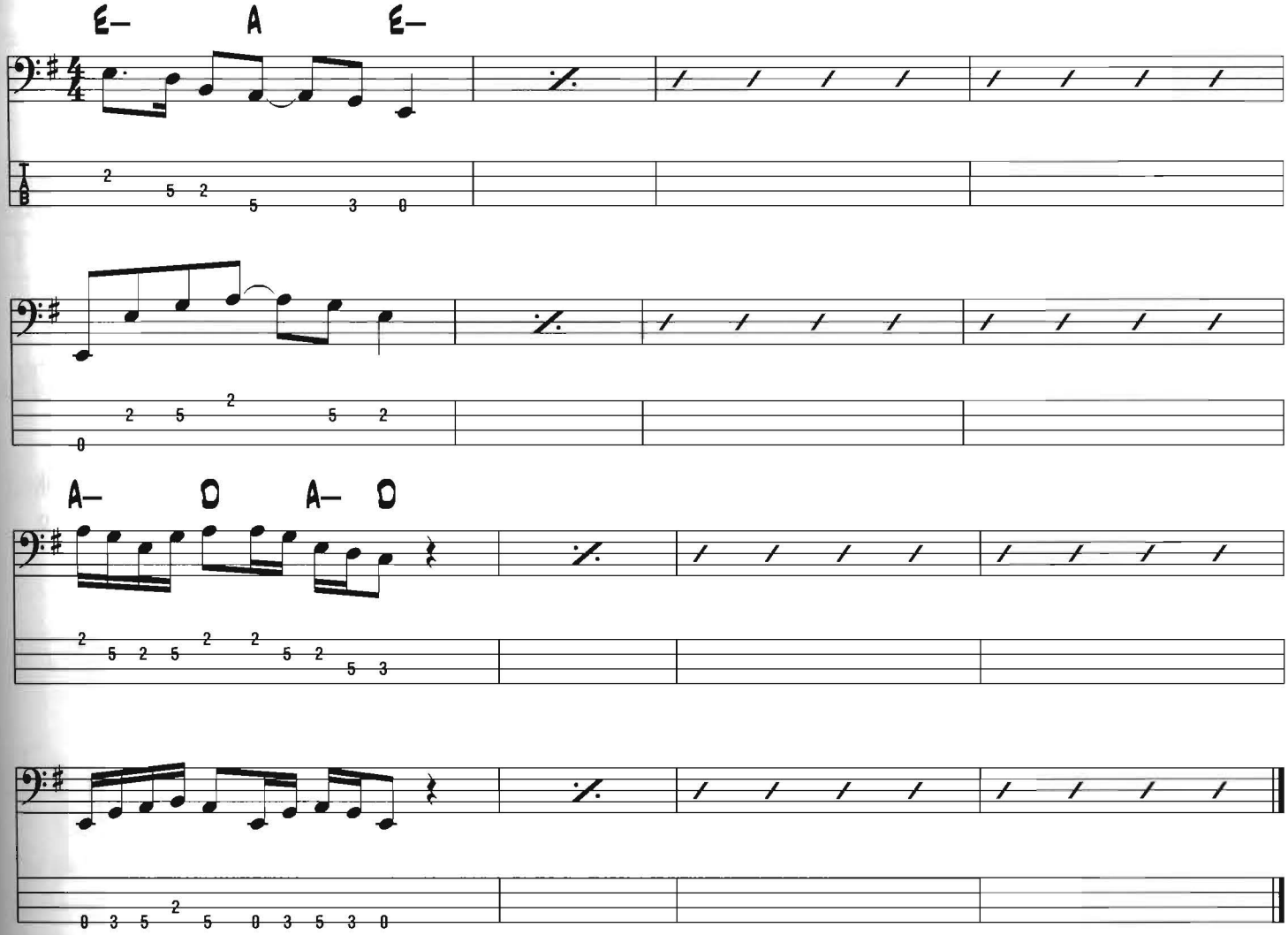
LISTEN **9** PLAY

1. Echo each phrase, exactly as you hear it.
2. Improvise an answer to each phrase. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the phrase you hear, and use the notes from the E minor pentatonic scale. Open strings will make this easier, but use any fingering you like.

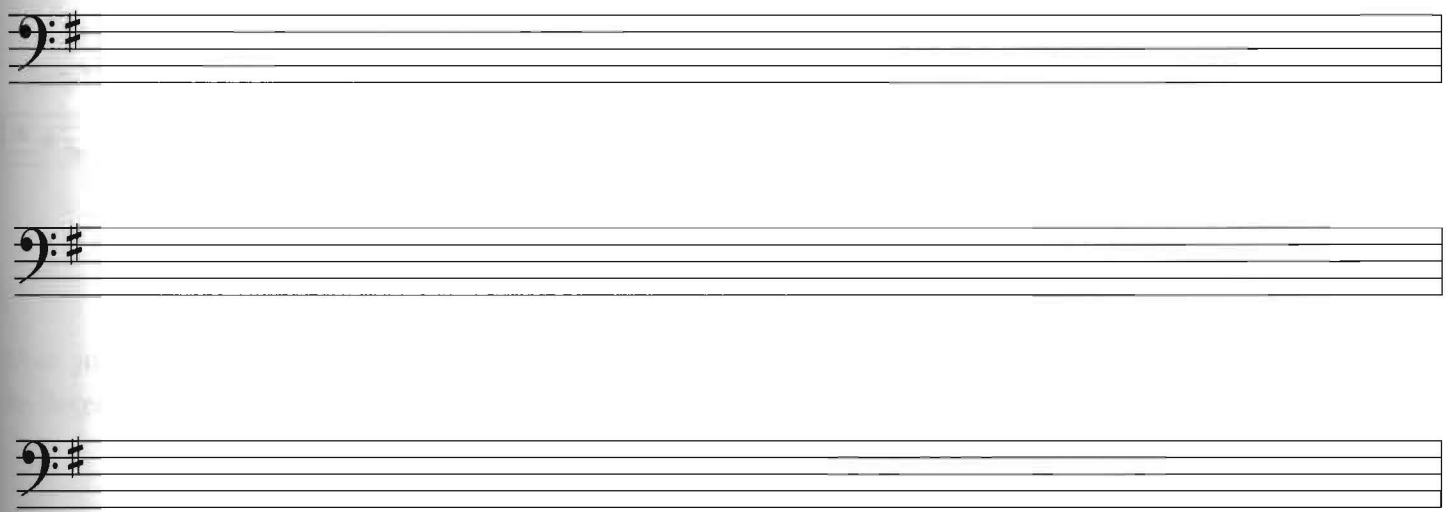
Listen **Play**



LISTEN 10 PLAY



Write out a few of your own ideas.



LISTEN 6 PLAY

Create a new bass line using any techniques you have learned. Memorize your line, and practice it along with the recording.

MEMORIZE

LISTEN 6 PLAY

Memorizing the licks and melodies from these exercises will help you play the tune, especially when you improvise. What you practice helps you when you perform. But performing is the best practice, so get together with other musicians and learn these tunes with your own band.

By now you should be able to play the riffs to "Sweet." Try following the written bass line for each riff. Make sure to keep your place in the form, and hook up with the groove. "Summary" shows everything you need to play "Sweet" from the lead sheet. Memorizing it will help you memorize the tune.

PRACTICE TIP

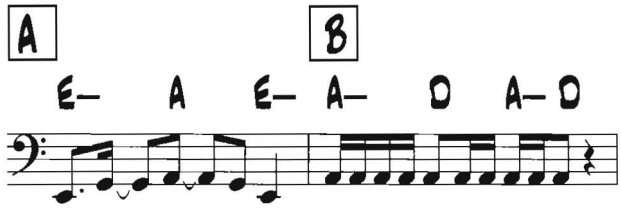
Write out a chord chart for "Sweet" by memory. This is a good way to help memorize tunes, and you can do it anywhere or any time. Don't worry about making it neat; just sketch out the measures and the chords, and think about solo ideas you might play over them.

SUMMARY

FORM
16-BAR AB
(1 CHORUS = 16 BARS)
A: 8 M.
B: 8 M.

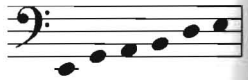
ARRANGEMENT
INTRO: 4 M.
1 CHORUS MELODY
2 CHORUS SOLO
1 CHORUS MELODY
END: 2 M.

RIFFS



SCALE

E MINOR PENTATONIC



PLAY "SWEET" WITH YOUR OWN BAND!

PLAYING BLUES

CHAPTER II

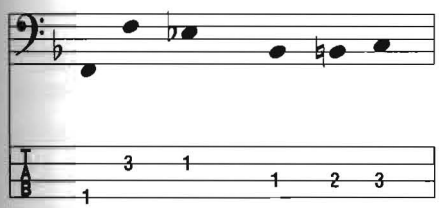
"Do It Now" is a *blues* tune. Blues began in the late 1800s, and it has had a profound influence on American music styles, including rock, jazz, and soul. To hear more blues, listen to artists such as B.B. King, the Blues Brothers, Robben Ford, Bonnie Raitt, James Cotton, Albert King, and Paul Butterfield.

LESSON 5
TECHNIQUE/THEORY

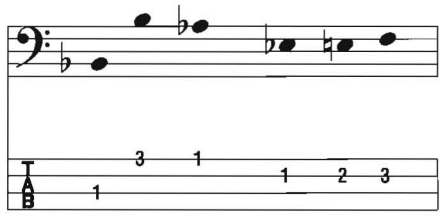
LISTEN 11 PLAY

Listen to "Do It Now" and play along with the recording. Try to match the bass. The bass line has three parts:

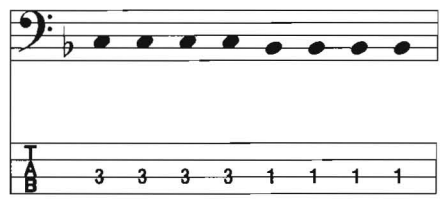
First Part



Second Part



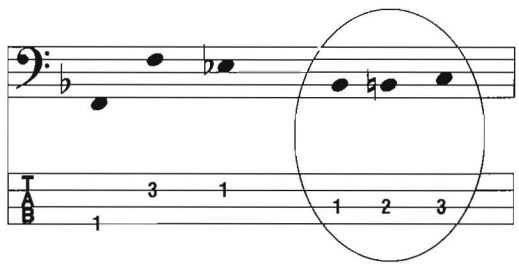
Third Part



The first and second phrases are similar, just played on different notes. They are played using the same hand position on different strings. Also try the second lick in sixth position, and use the same strings as the first phrase.

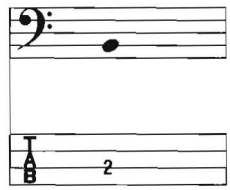
HAMMER ON

Hammer-on technique makes it easier to play quick runs such as this (first lick):

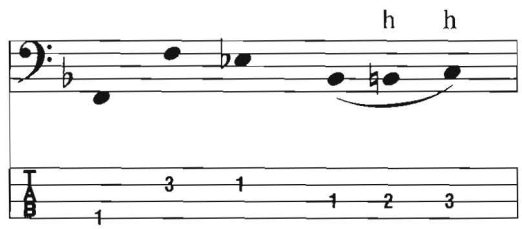


When you "hammer on" a string, you sound the note with fingers of your left hand, striking the string against the fingerboard, rather than plucking it with your right hand.

Hammer on a B-natural with your second finger.



Practice the first lick, hammering on the B-natural and C ("h" means "hammer-on").

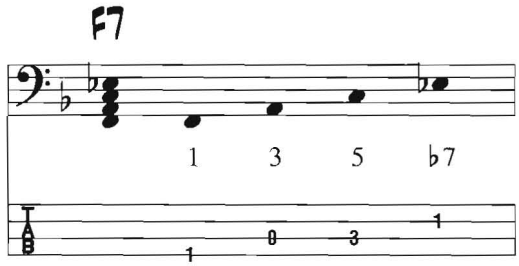


Practice the "hammer-on" on both licks of this tune until each note sounds strong, clear, and even.

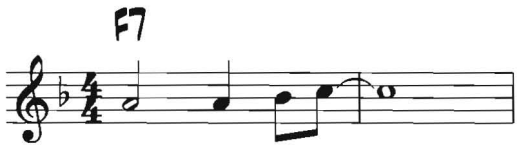
BASS LINES

The bass line for "Do It Now" is based on *seventh chords*. A seventh chord is a four-note chord that includes the flat 7 scale tone (also called the *dominant 7*).

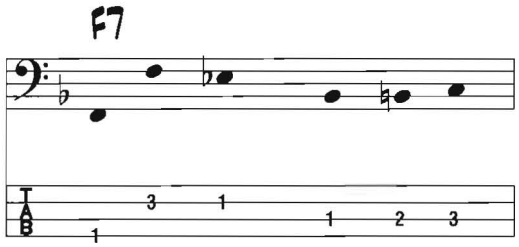
Play the F7 chord:



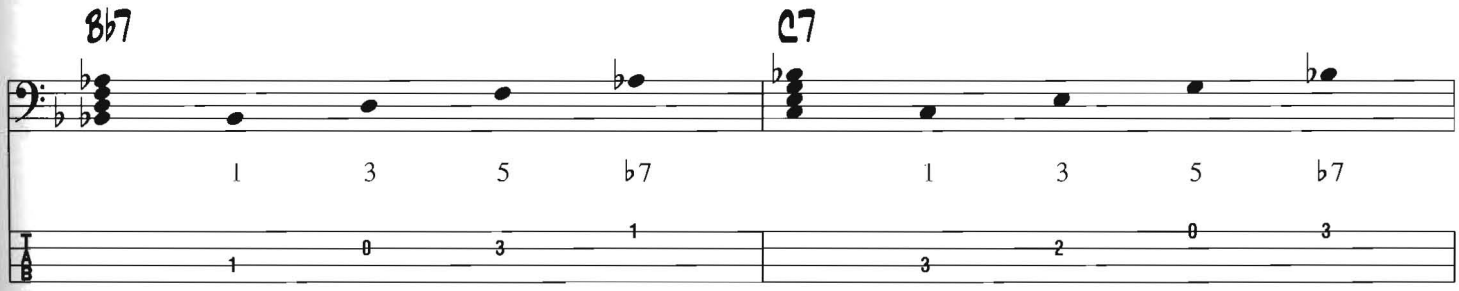
In a lead sheet, seventh chords are notated like this:



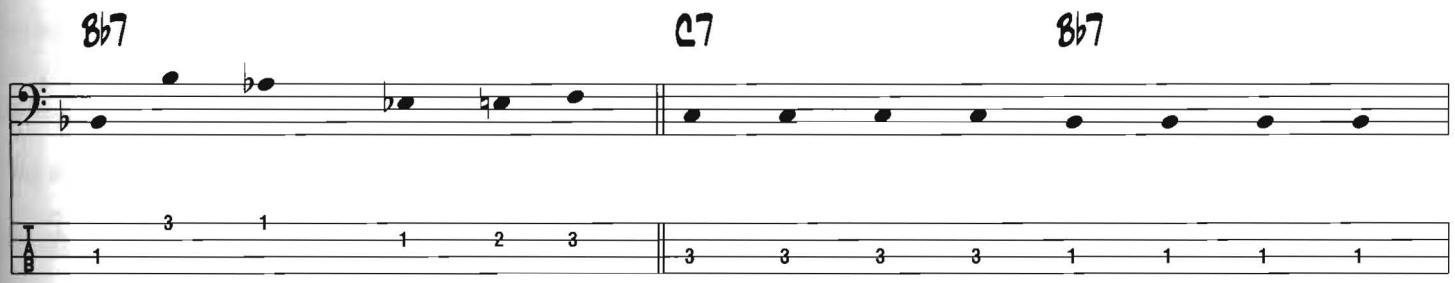
Play the first lick of "Do It Now." Which notes come from F7?



The lead sheet to "Do It Now" also has the B♭7 and C7 chords:



Play the other licks to "Do It Now." Sometimes the bass on the recording uses the seventh in the line, and sometimes it plays just the root of the chord. While the seventh can add a good color to the lick, you don't need to use the seventh every time you see the chord. On the recording, the bass plays the root at the C7 chord and at the B♭7 chord after it.



When you create your bass part, try to hear the quality of the chord, in addition to following the notation. Use the chord symbols to create a bass line that sounds good to you.

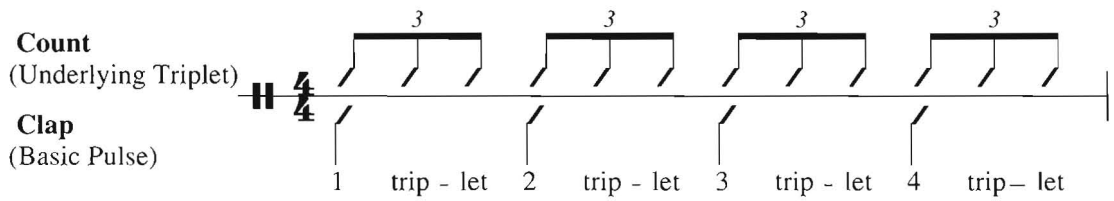
LESSON 6
LEARNING THE GROOVE

HOOKING UP TO A BLUES SHUFFLE

LISTEN 12 PLAY

Listen to "Do It Now." This groove has its roots in traditional r&b, gospel, and jazz. The feel is often called a *12/8 shuffle* because of the twelve eighth notes in each bar. (The drums play these on the ride cymbal or hi-hat.)

Clap on every beat, and count triplets: "1 trip-let 2 trip-let 3 trip-let 4 trip-let." The basic pulse (clap) is on the quarter note. However, each pulse also has an underlying triplet that divides the beat into three equal parts.



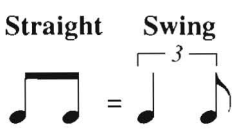
This triplet feel is part of what makes the beat a *shuffle*. While all shuffles don't include triplets on every single beat, the underlying triplet *feel* is always present.

The triplet is a fundamental aspect of all swing and shuffle beats. Understanding and feeling the concept of "subdivisions" (dividing the pulse into smaller rhythms) will help you play many other kinds of grooves.

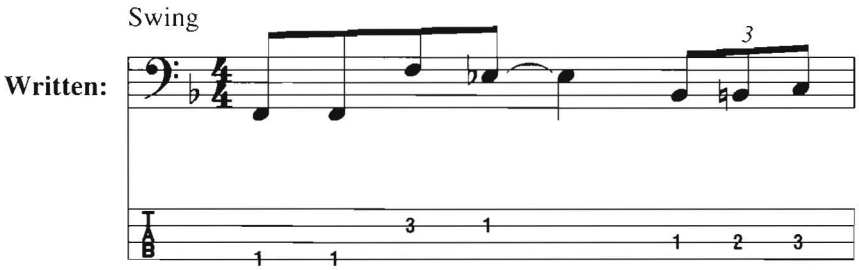
"Do It Now" begins with the drums playing two beats of triplets. This establishes the shuffle groove. Listen for the steady triplet beat in the hi-hat, and find the triplet patterns in the other instruments. Listen to the bass part. Which beats have a triplet feel? Is the triplet pattern the same in every measure or does it change?

SWING EIGHTH NOTES

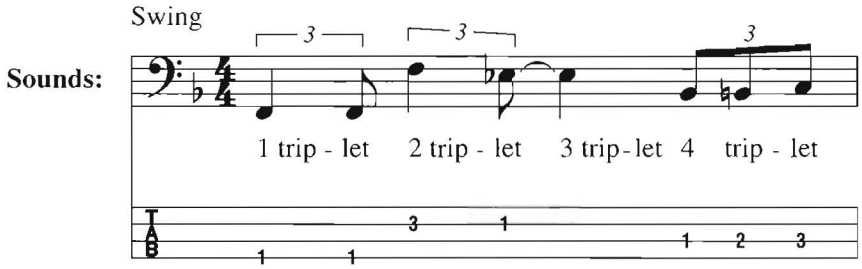
Eighth notes in shuffle grooves are usually played as triplets, even though they are notated as *straight* eighth notes.



Though these rhythms look different, in some musical styles, they are played the same. The notated part to "Do It Now" shows eighth notes notated like this:



Since it is a shuffle tune, they are played more like this:



The part is easier to read without the triplet markings on every beat, and the rhythms are played as triplets even though they are notated as if they were regular eighths. Interpreting rhythms in this way is called "swinging the eighth notes." Swing eighth notes are common in many styles of music, including blues, jazz, and swing.

Sometimes, the word "swing," "swing feel," or "shuffle" appears on the lead sheet, telling you how to play eighth notes. Often, though, you will just try it both ways and choose which fits the groove best. The style of the tune may help you choose whether to swing your eighth notes or play them straight.

LISTEN 12 PLAY

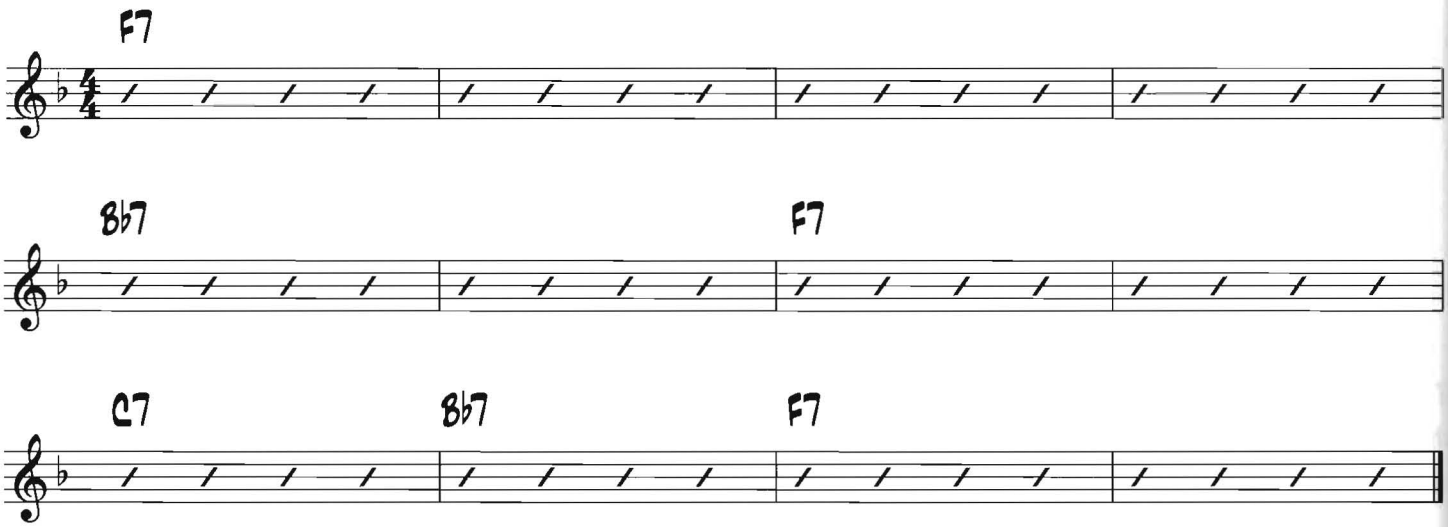
Listen again to "Do It Now" and play the bass part along with the recording. Feel the triplets on every beat, listen to the drums, and hook up with the groove.

LESSON 7
IMPROVISATION

FORM: 12-BAR BLUES

Listen to "Do It Now" and follow the form. The form of this tune is called a *12-bar blues*.

LISTEN 11 PLAY

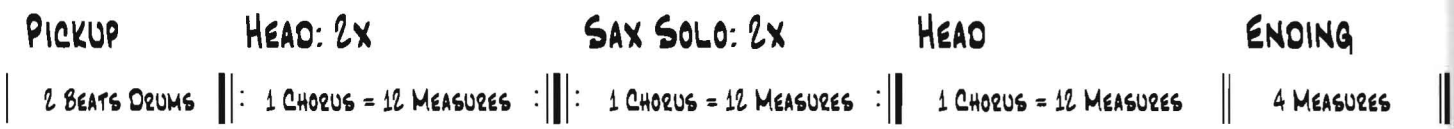


A 12-bar blues has three 4-bar phrases. It is common for the first two phrases in the melody to be similar and the third one to be different. This form is very common in many styles of music, including jazz, rock, and funk.

In "Do It Now," the first phrase has four bars of the I chord, **F7**. The second phrase has two bars of the IV chord, **B♭7**, followed by two bars of the I chord, **F7**. The third section has one bar of V (**C7**), one bar of IV (**B♭7**), and then two bars of I (**F7**). This is typically the way that chords move in blues.

ARRANGEMENT

"Do It Now" begins with the drum playing two beats of triplets. This is called a *pickup*—a short introduction, less than a measure long, that leads to a strong downbeat. The arrangement played on the recording is:

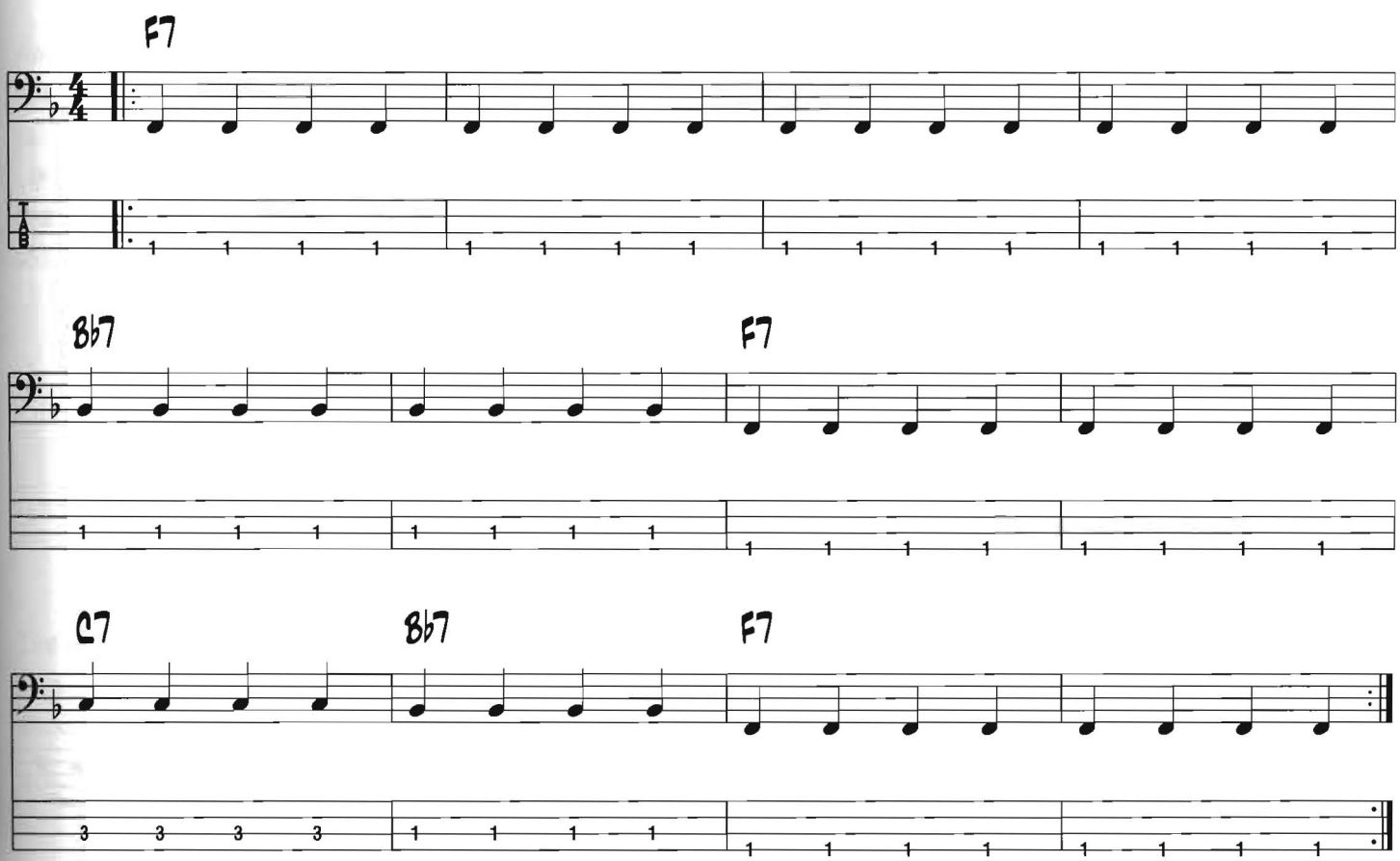


PRACTICE TIP

When you listen to any music, figure out the arrangement. How long is the head? Is there an introduction or an ending? How many solo choruses does the band take?

Practice playing "Do It Now" using just the chord roots, and get the feel of the form. Memorize the blues form and chord progression. You will see it again many times throughout your career.

LISTEN 13 PLAY

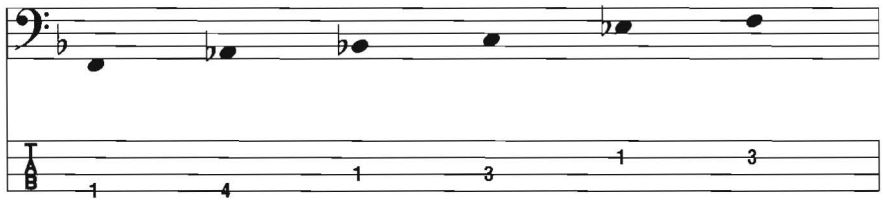


IDEAS FOR BASS LINES

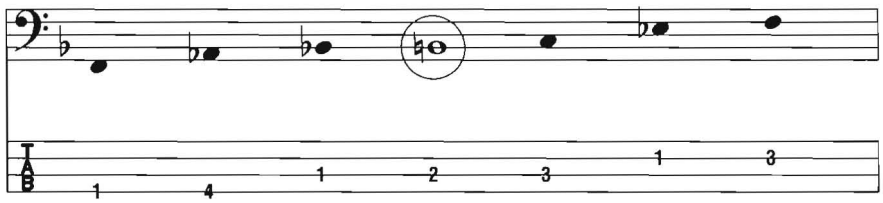
In chapter 1, you created bass lines by using chords and scales. Chord tones—especially the root and fifth—are often the primary notes of a bass line, and they are connected by scale tones. You learned the chords of "Do It Now" in lesson 1. Now, you will learn a new scale that will help you connect these chord tones and create a good bass line.

BLUES SCALE

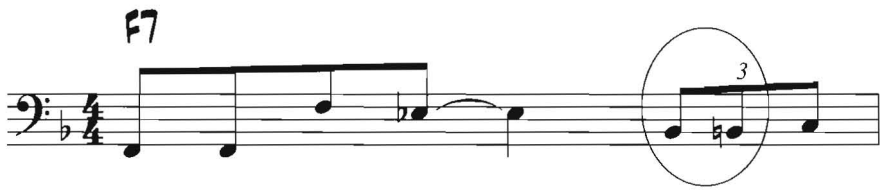
In chapter 1, you created bass lines using the minor pentatonic scale. Here is the F minor pentatonic scale:



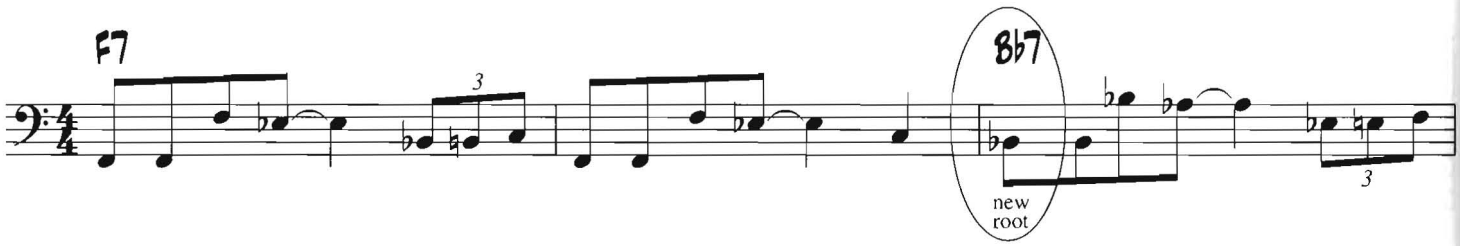
The *F blues scale* has just one more note—the flat fifth degree (C♭ or B-natural):



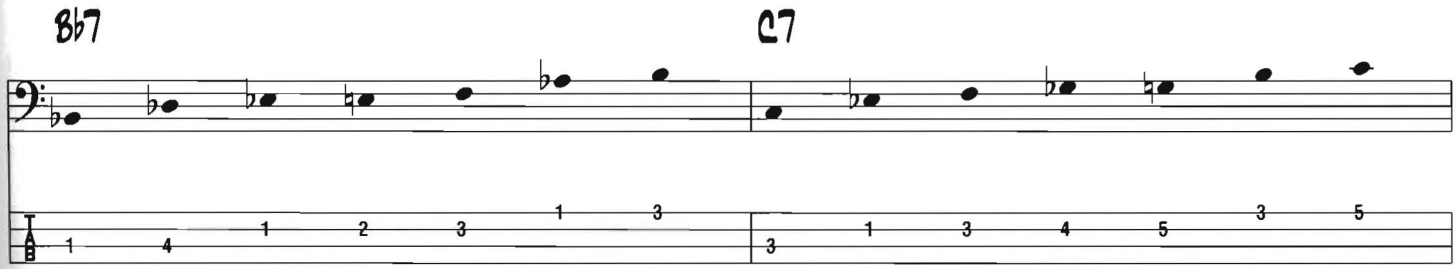
Here is the first lick of "Do It Now." Notice how the F7 chord tones, F and E♭, are placed prominently, one on the first beat and the other held for a long duration. The chord tones E♭ and C are connected by two notes from the F blues scale, B♭ and B-natural:



At a new chord symbol, play the new chord root on the first beat:



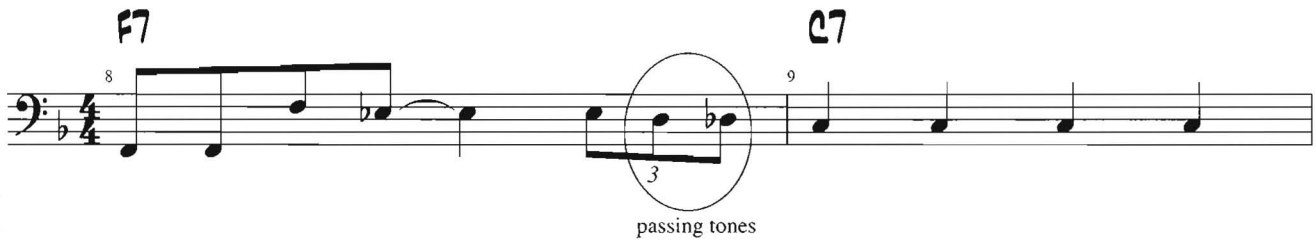
At the B♭7 chord, there are notes that come from the *B♭ blues scale*—E♭ and E-natural, as well as chord tones. The other blues scale you might use is the C blues scale, though in the recording, the bass part stays on the root of this chord when it gets there:



PASSING TONES

Another idea for your bass lines is connect two notes by going fret by fret from one note to the other. These in-between notes are called *chromatic notes* or *passing tones*. In fact, in the blues scale, the flat fifth is like a passing tone between the fourth and fifth notes of a minor pentatonic scale.

Passing tones help connect notes. In "Do It Now," the bass uses passing tones to connect the E♭ of the F7 chord to the C of the C chord (measure 8 to 9):

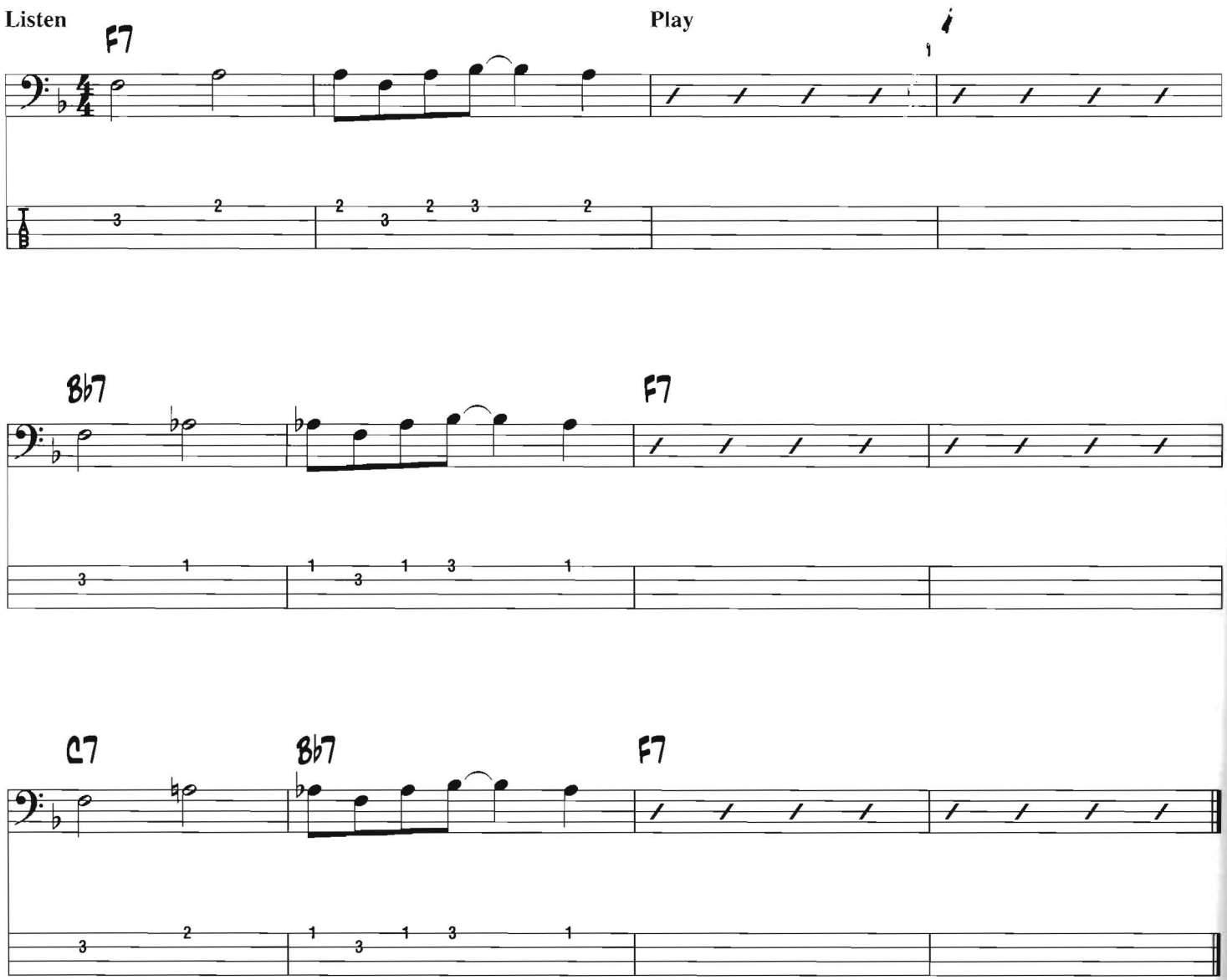


The D and D♭ passing tones don't fit the blues scales or chord tones of this tune, but they sound good here because they are tucked in between two chord tones. They are played quickly, on a weak beat, so they don't stand out. Their presence helps connect the two different chords, and gives the bass line more character.

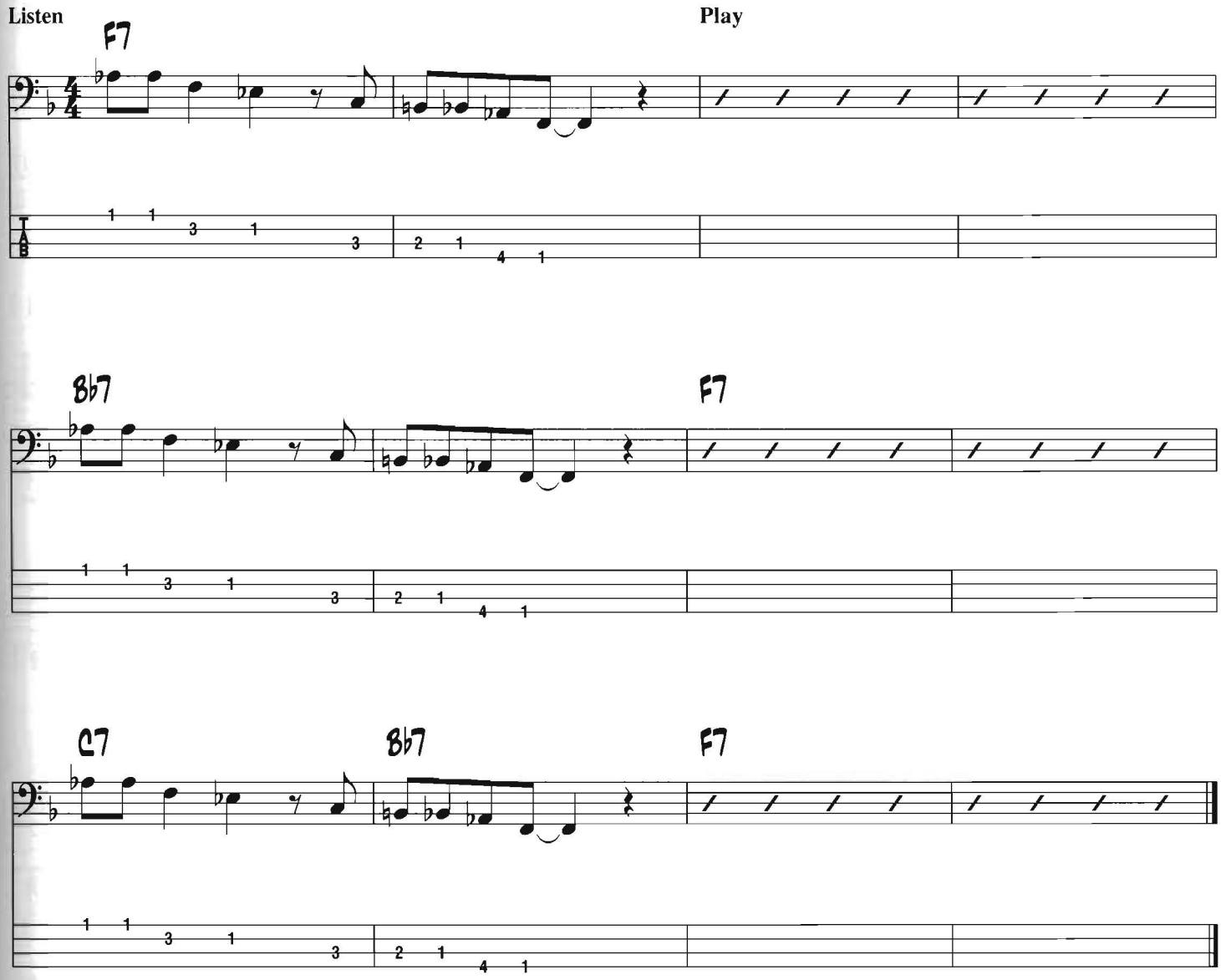
CALL AND RESPONSE

1. Echo each phrase, exactly as you hear it. Notice the flat seven in each phrase.
2. Improvise an answer to each phrase. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the phrase you hear, and use the notes from the F blues scale, including the flat seven.

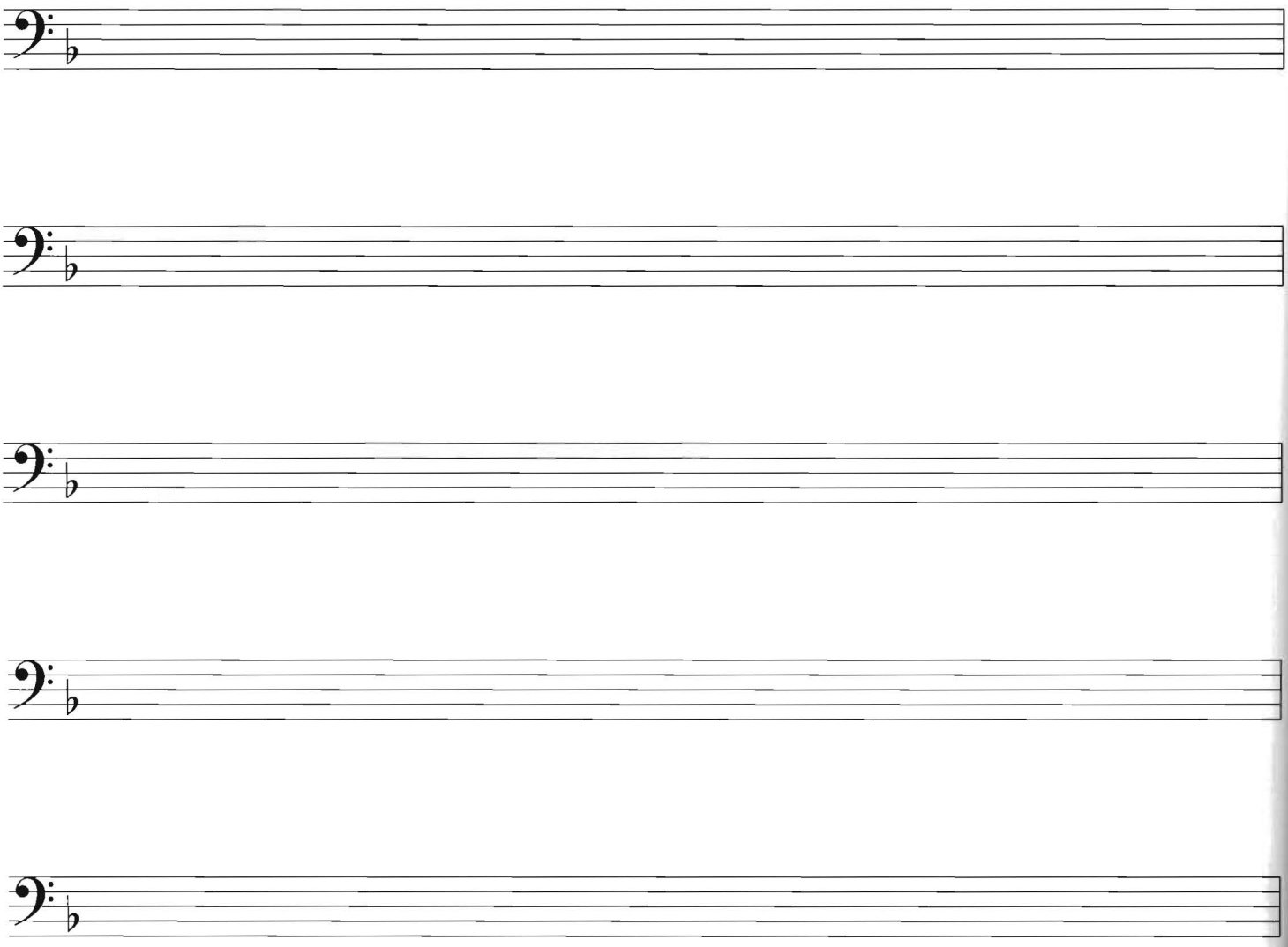
LISTEN 14 PLAY



LISTEN 15 PLAY



Write out a few of your own ideas for blues bass lines, using any of the techniques you have learned.



LISTEN 13 PLAY

Create a solo using any licks you have played. Memorize your solo, and practice it along with the recording.

PERFORMANCE TIP

Using the chords, scales, and rhythmic groove of the tune will lead to good improvised bass lines. Keep in mind, though, that a very good line can be made without those passing tones. Sometimes, you may want to just play the chord roots, as you did earlier this chapter, or just roots and fifths, perhaps with a triplet feel. Simple bass lines can be very effective.

LESSON 8
READING

BASS PART

This *chart* (written part) uses symbols and instructions that direct you to skip around the pages. When you get the hang of these symbols, you will see that they help reduce the number of written measures, and make the chart easier to read quickly, at a glance. Sometimes, these directions are called the chart's *road map*.

2 BEATS DRUMS Pickup. Short introduction (less than a measure).

Sign. Later, there will be a direction (D.S., or "from the sign") telling you to jump to this symbol from another location in the music.

Coda symbol. "Coda" is another word for "Ending." On the last chorus, skip from the first coda symbol to the second coda symbol (at the end of the piece). This symbol may also have the words "To Coda" or other directions (such as "last time only"). Often, you will just see the coda symbol by itself.

D.S. AL From the sign ( ), and take the coda. Jump back to the sign (first measure, after the pickup), and play from there. When you reach the first coda symbol, skip ahead to the next coda symbol (at the end).

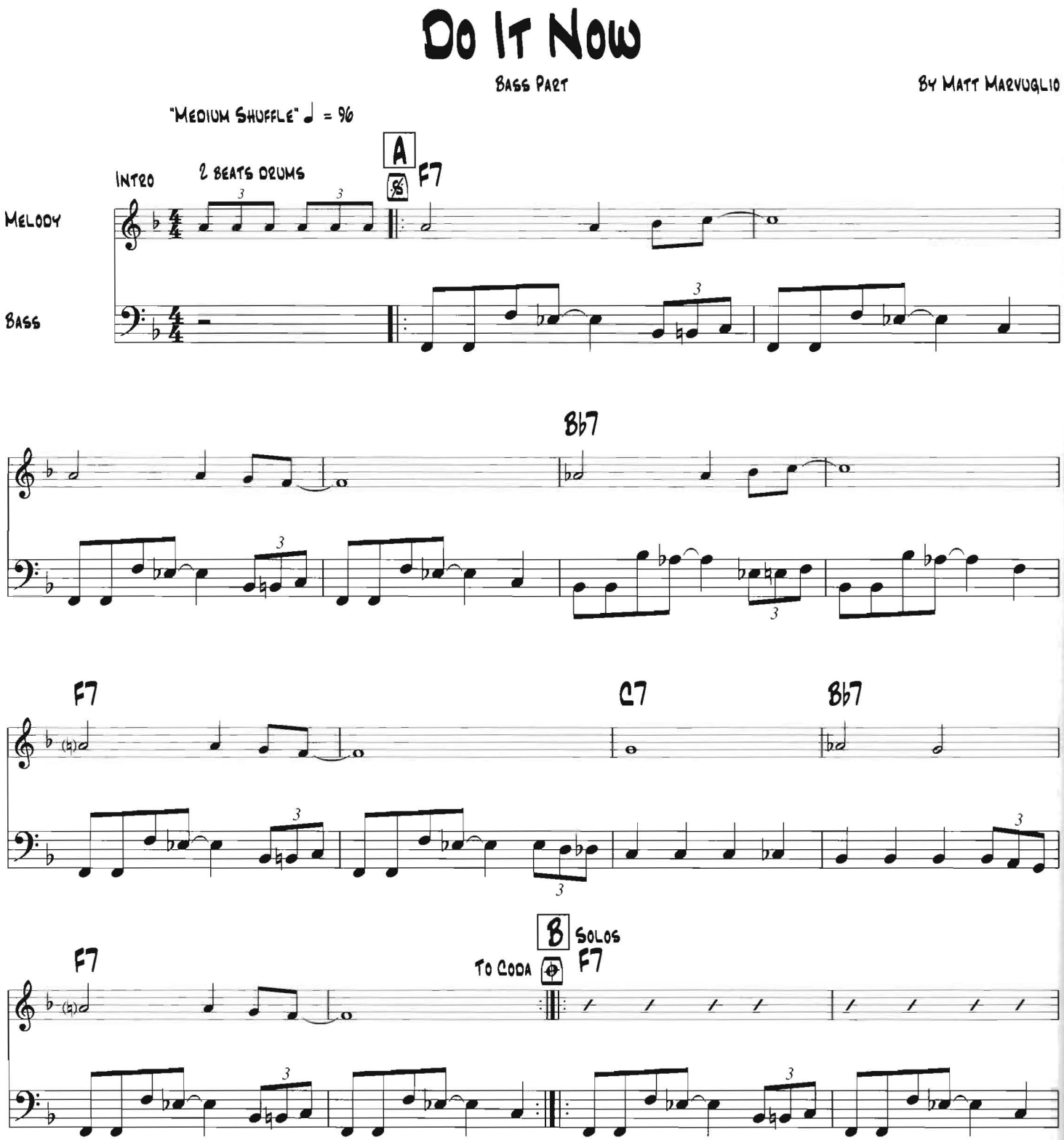
AFTER SOLOS When all solo choruses are finished, follow this direction.

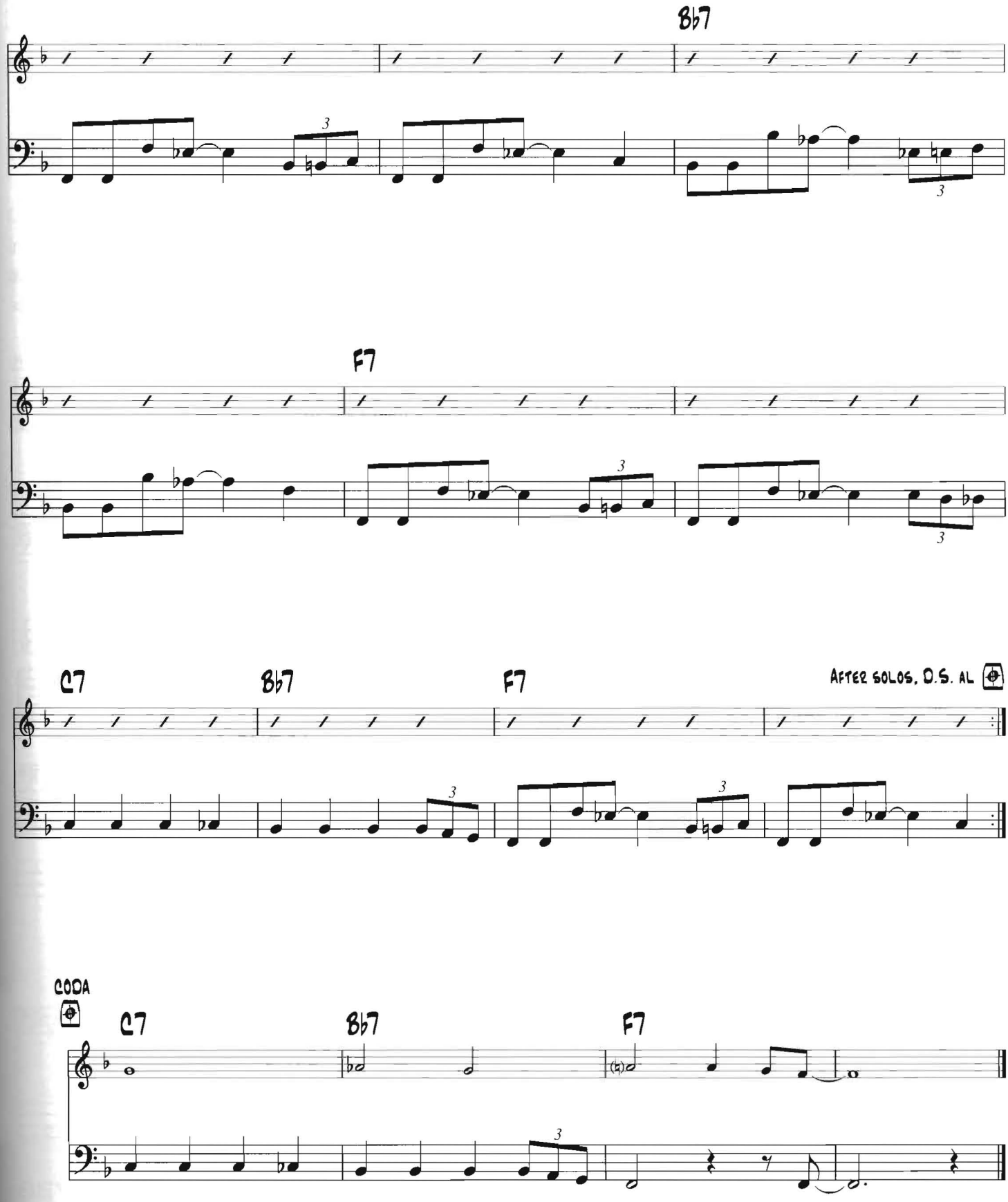
Different choruses may be marked with different letters. In this tune, the head is marked "A," and the improvisation choruses are marked "B."

SOLO Solo chorus. Play this part when other musicians in the band improvise. When you play this tune with your own band, you might repeat this section several times, depending on how many people solo. When you solo, then obviously, you won't play this written part.

Play "Do It Now" along with the recording and follow the written bass part exactly. Even if you have it memorized already, follow the part as you play.

LISTEN 13 PLAY

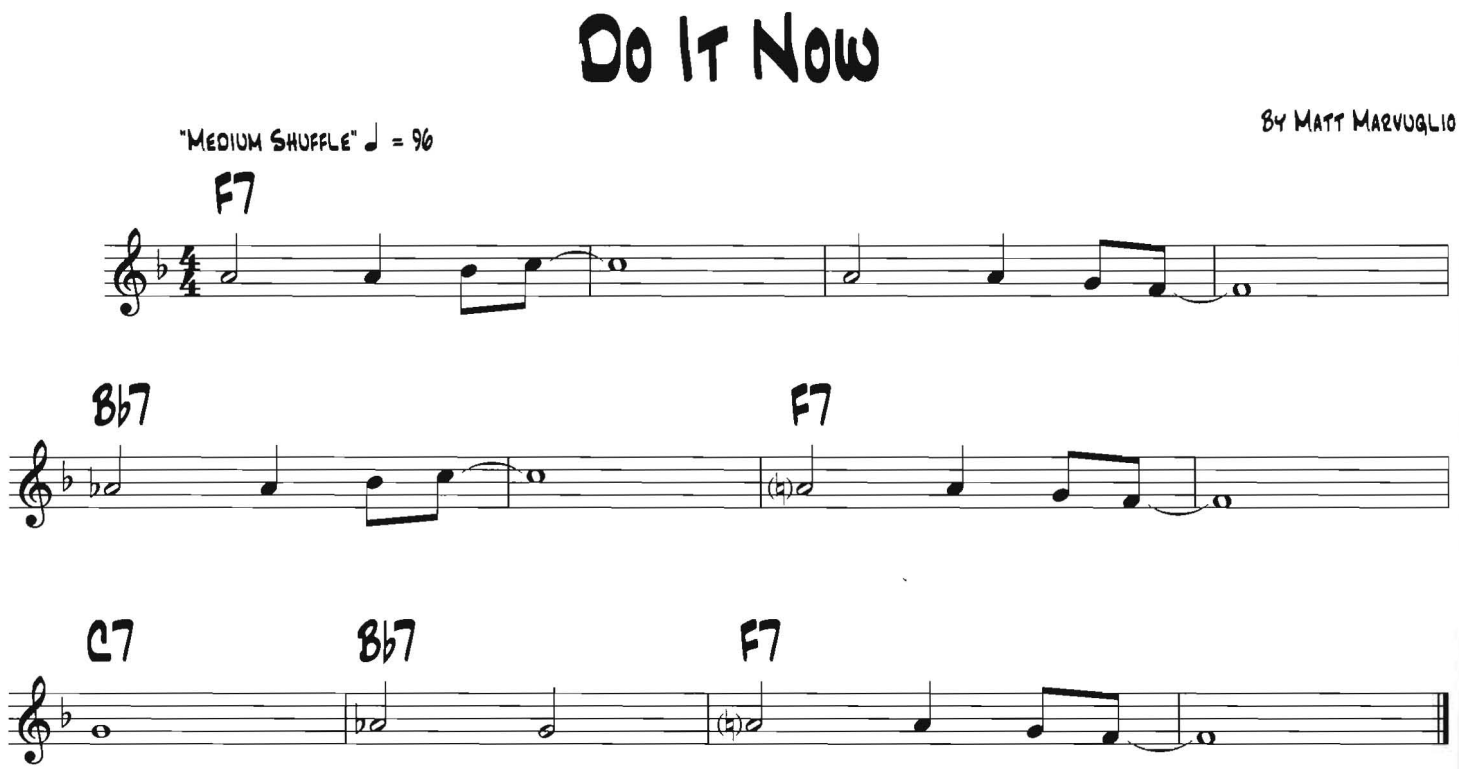



B♭7
F7
C7
B♭7
F7
After solos, D.S. al
Coda
C7
B♭7
F7

LEAD SHEET

Now play "Do It Now" with the recording, but work from the lead sheet. Create your own bass part.

LISTEN 13 PLAY



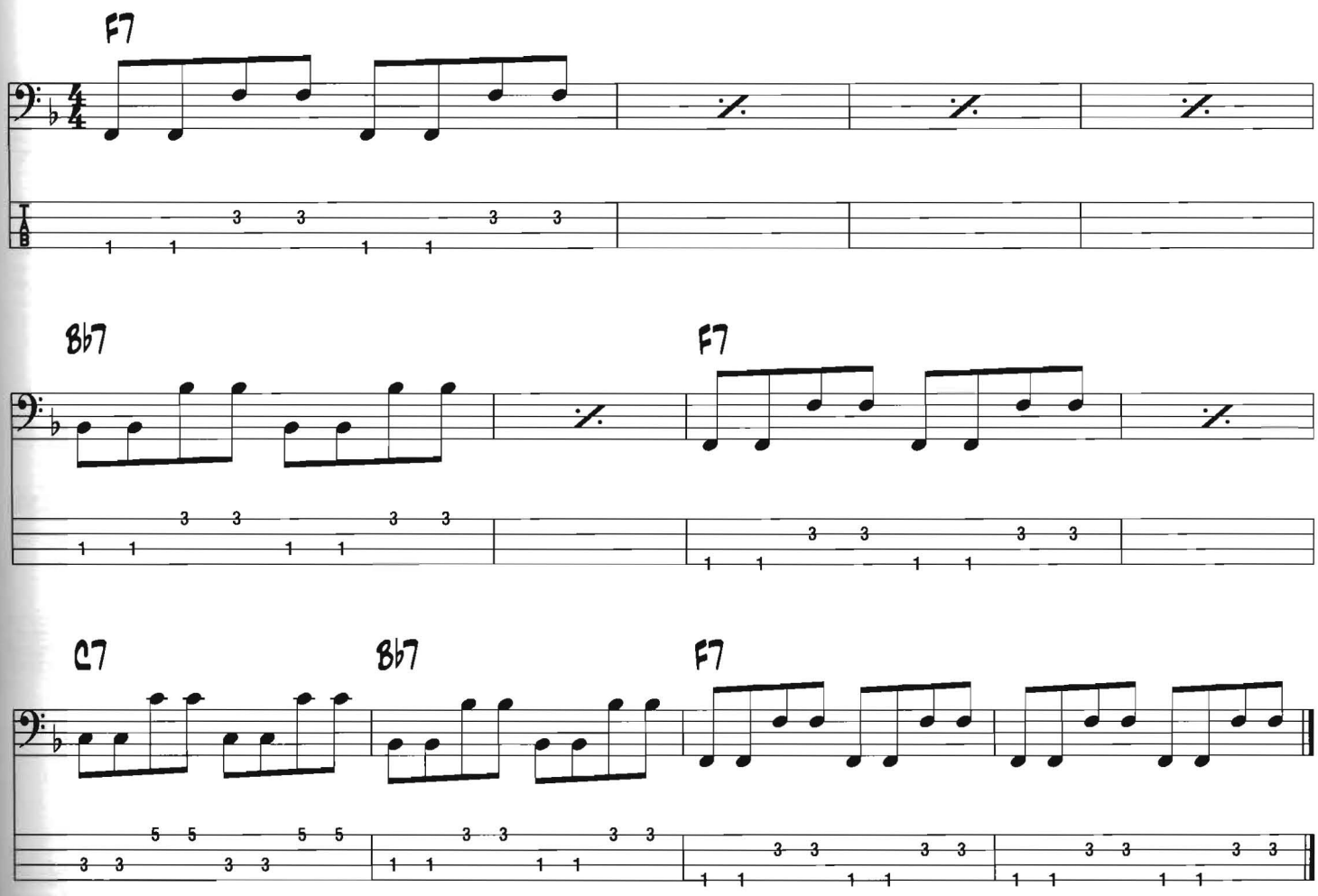
CHAPTER 2
DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE

OCTAVE PRACTICE

Octave leaps are common in bass lines, and this exercise will help you practice finding them from the chords in "Do It Now." Play the high octaves with either your third finger or your fourth finger, depending on which is most comfortable. Where multiple fret choices are written, choose the one that feels most comfortable, or has the sound you prefer.

Play this exercise along with "Do It Now." Try several fingering options. Swing your eighth notes!

LISTEN 13 PLAY



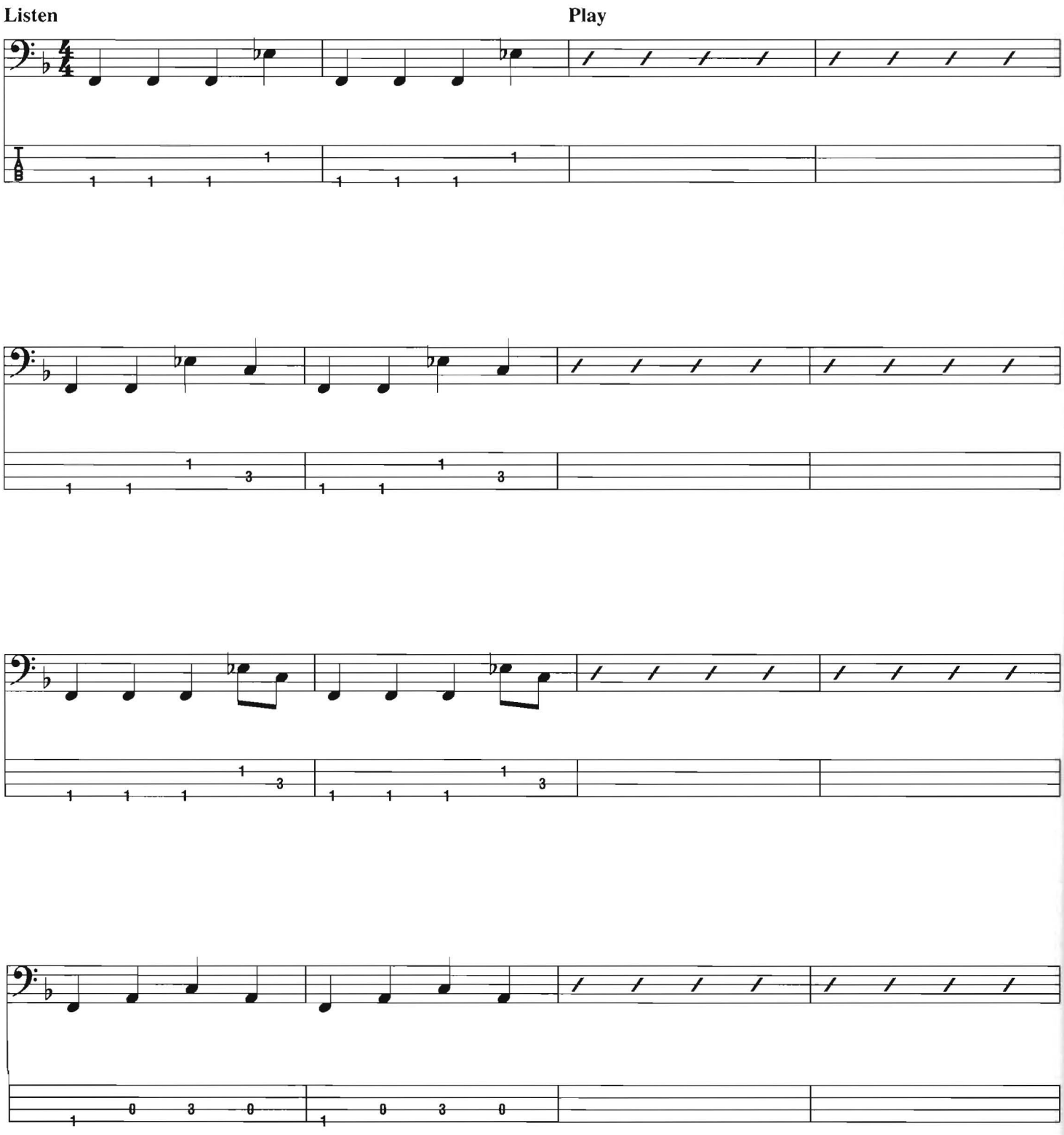
SEVENTH CHORDS

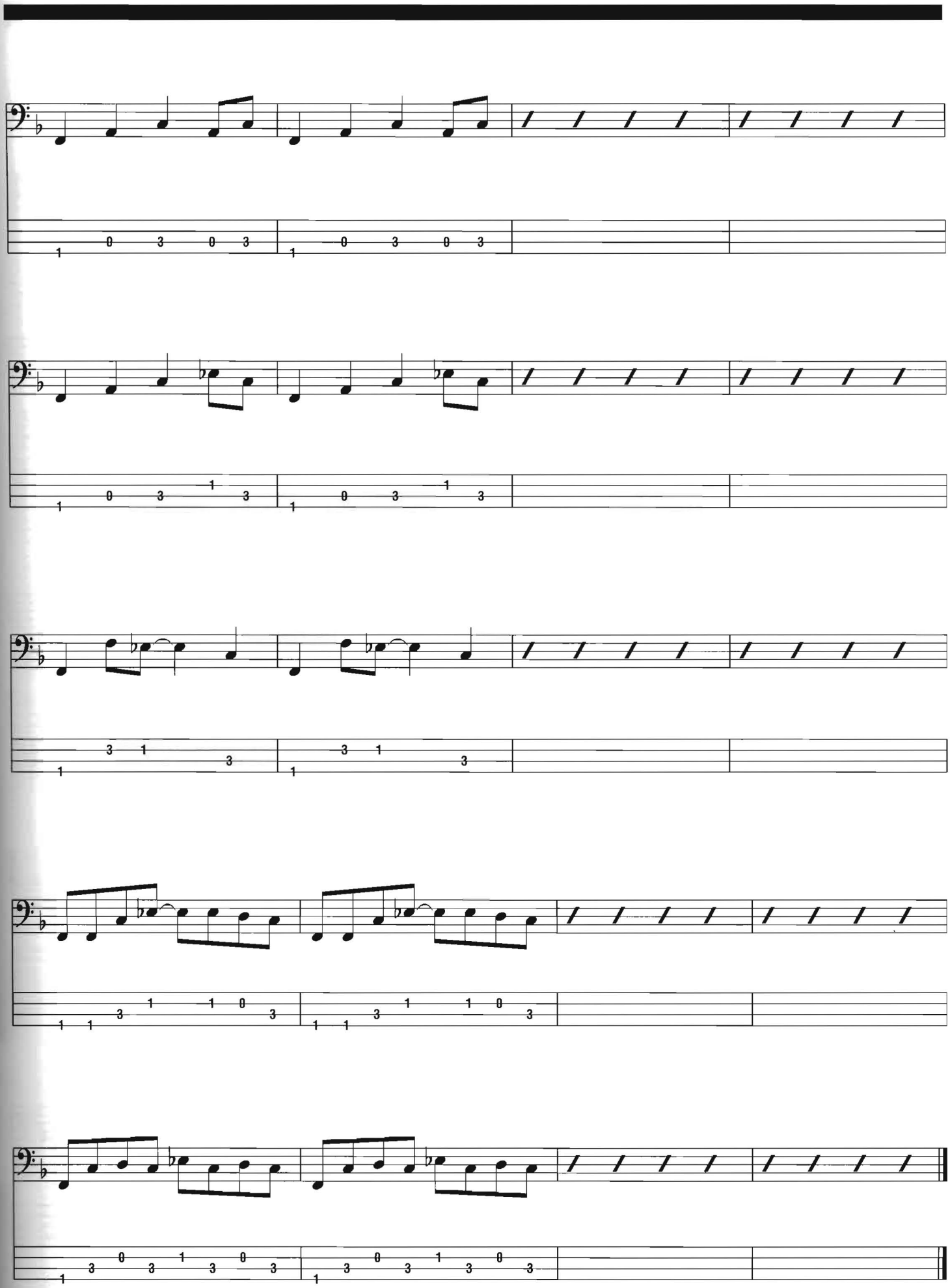
Once you are comfortable with octaves, try adding the flat seventh. This note works very well in blues. Where do you think it sounds best?

CALL AND RESPONSE: LICKS

Listen to the recording and repeat each lick. These exercises will develop your triplet feel.

LISTEN 16 PLAY

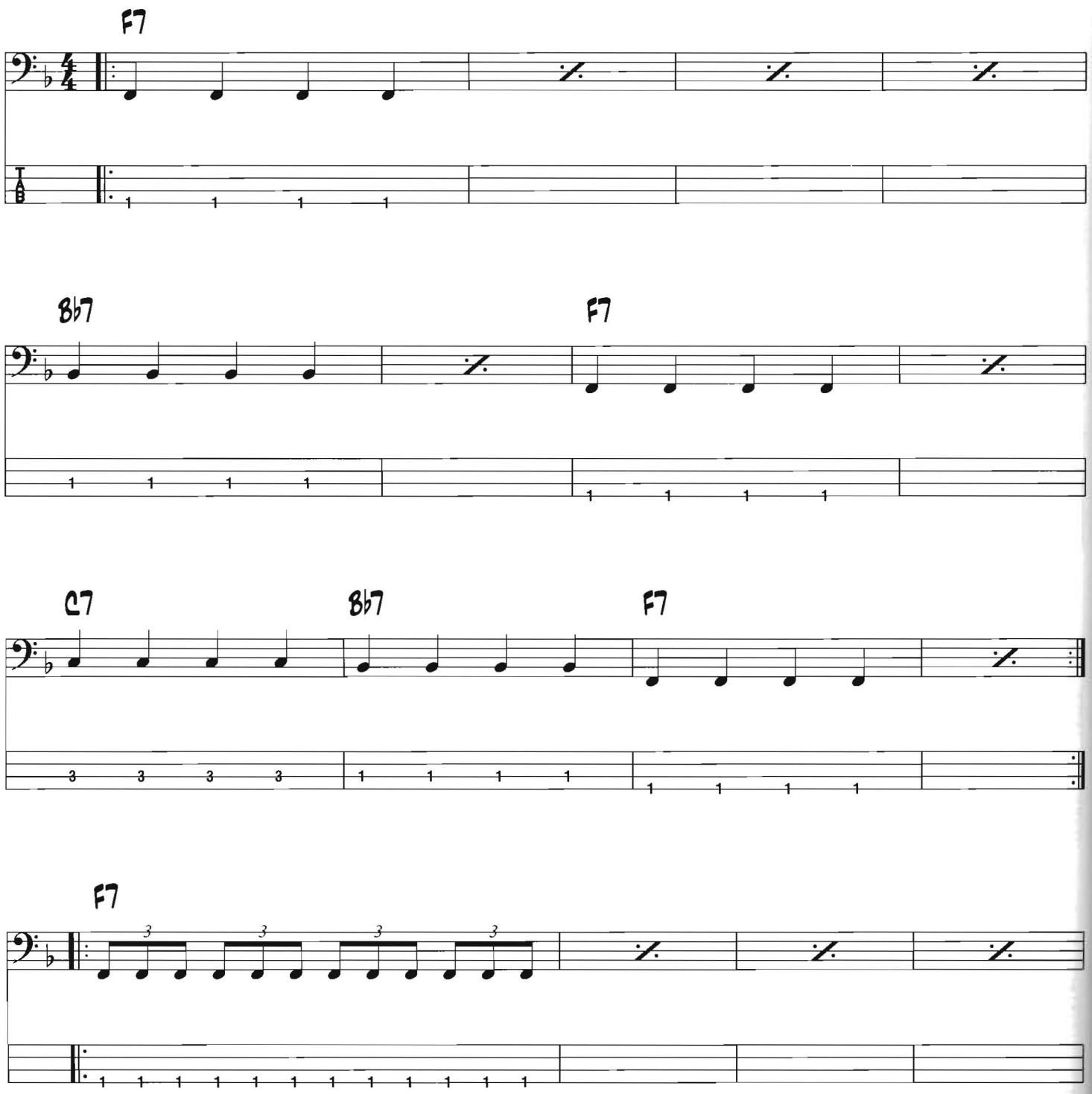


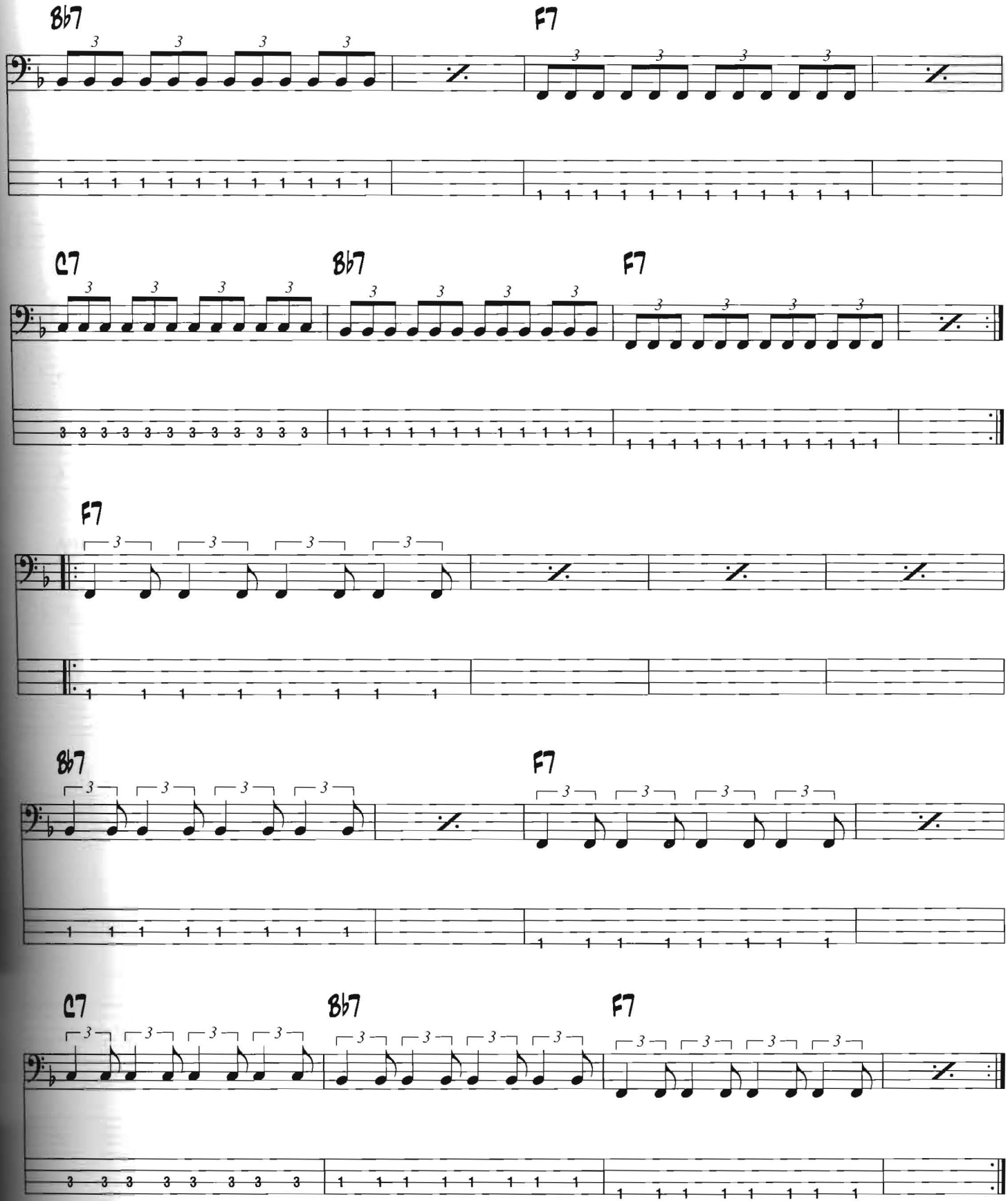


RHYTHM PRACTICE

Practice these rhythms along with the recording.

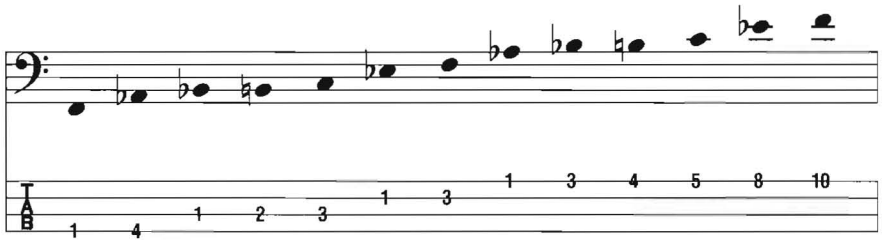
LISTEN 13 PLAY




B♭7
F7
C7
B♭7
F7
F7
B♭7
F7
C7
B♭7
F7

F BLUES SCALE PRACTICE

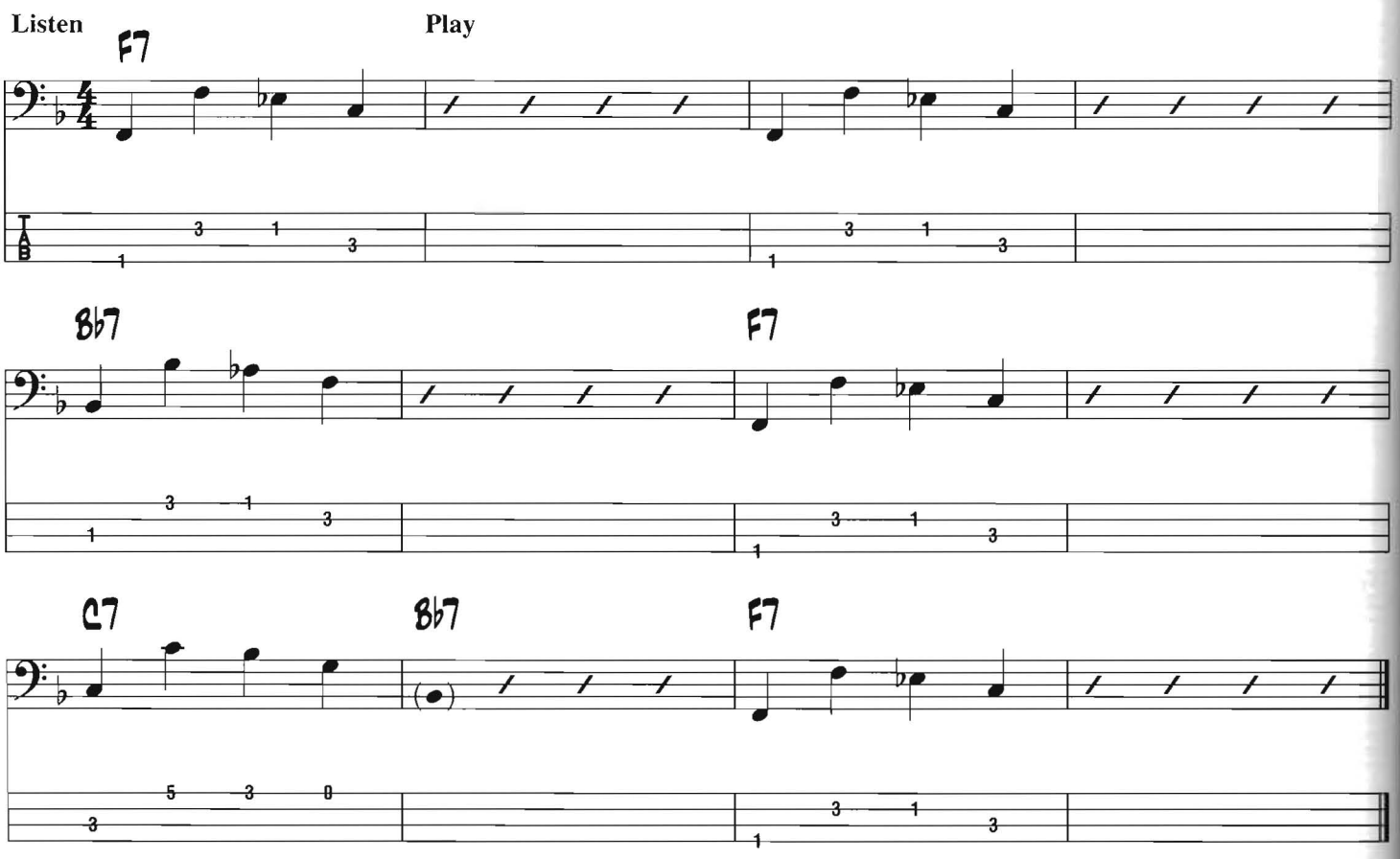
Practice the F blues scale in two octaves.



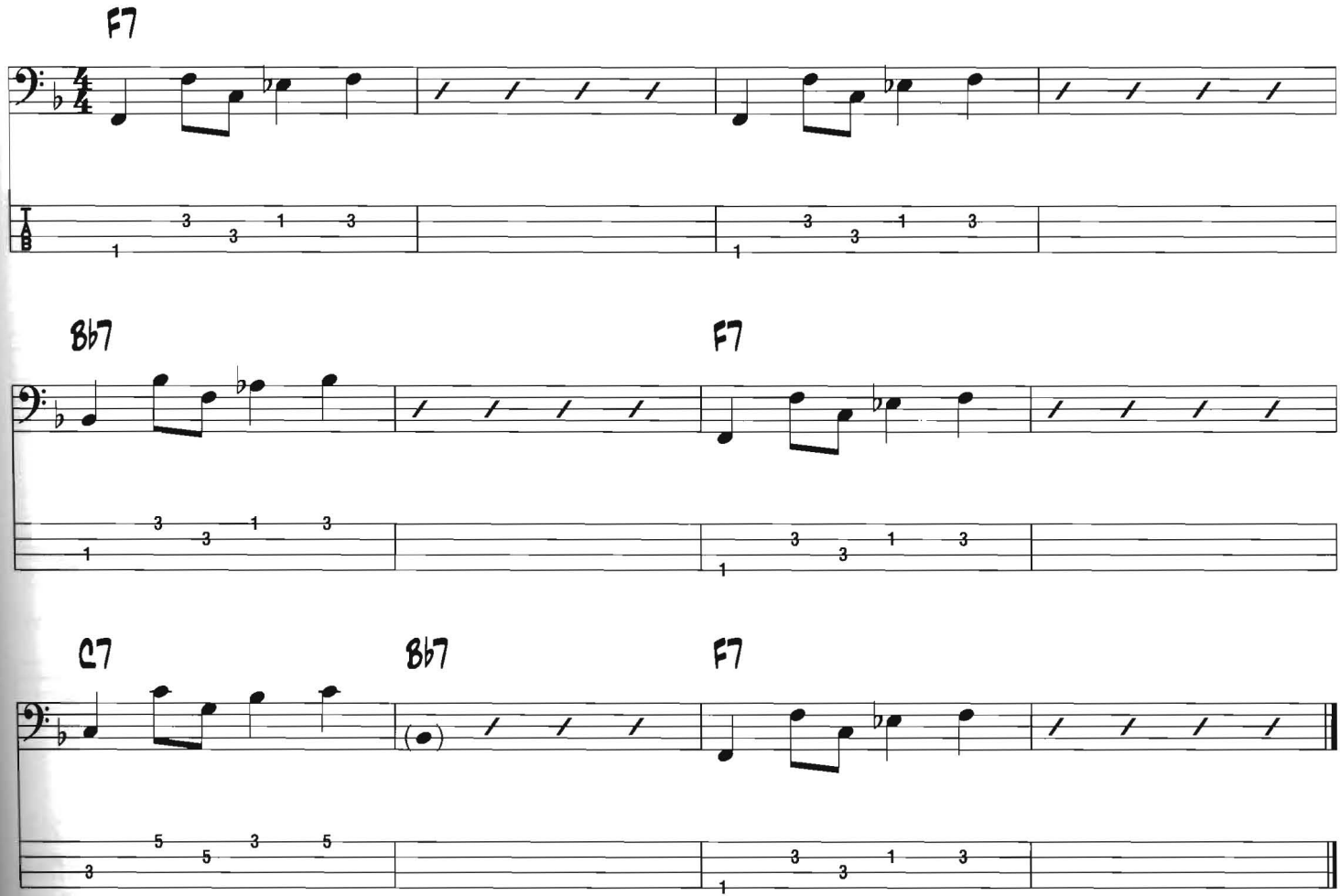
CALL AND RESPONSE

1. Echo each phrase, exactly as you hear it. Notice that the C7 lick (measure 9) needs to be moved to B♭ (measure 10).
2. Improvise an answer to each phrase. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the phrase you hear, and use the notes from the F blues scale.

LISTEN 17 PLAY



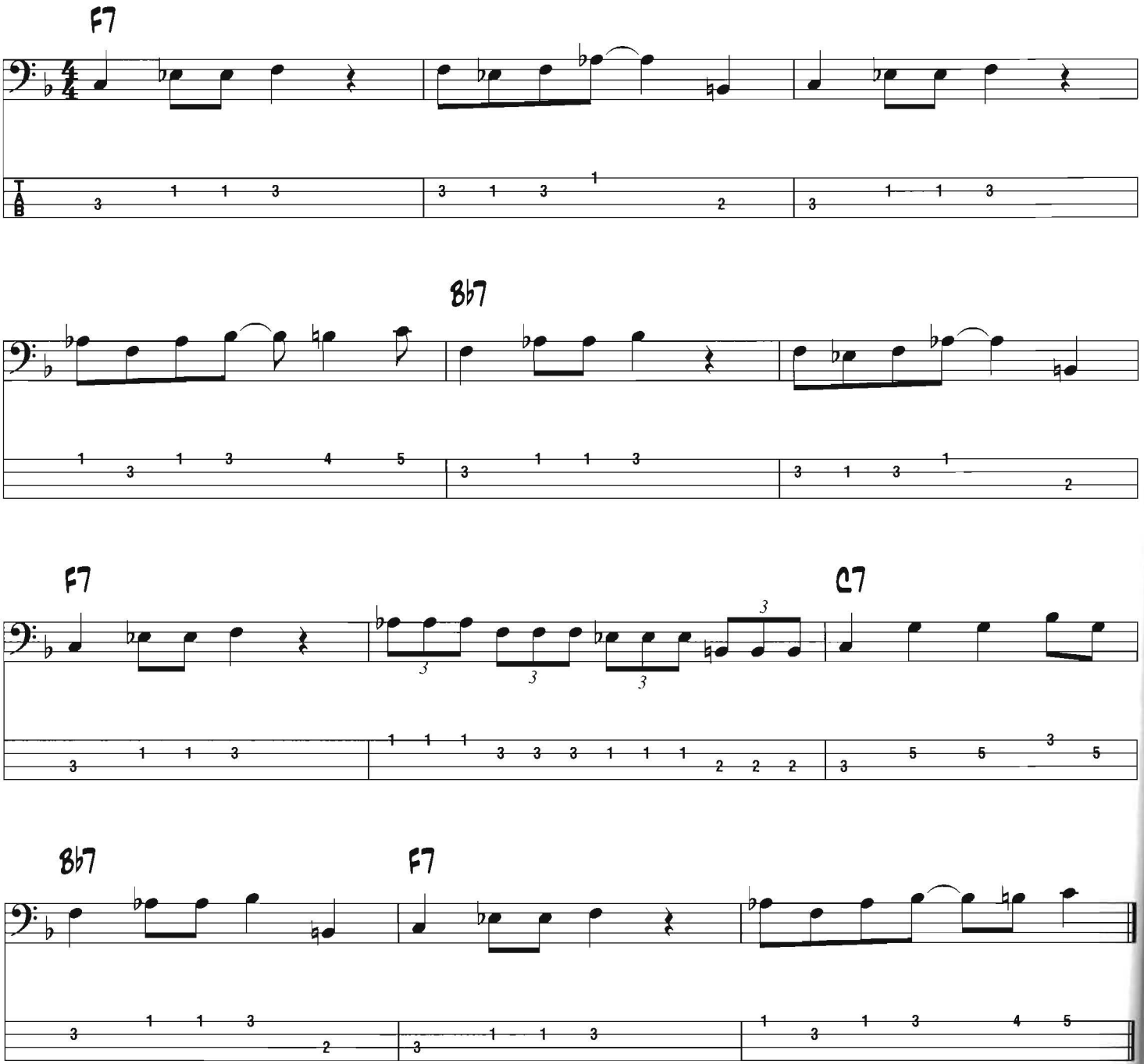
LISTEN 18 PLAY



SOLO PRACTICE

Practice this solo along with the recording.

LISTEN 19 PLAY



MEMORIZE

Review the written bass part in lesson 8. Decide what fingerings you will play. It's okay to write note names and fingerings on your part to help you remember them.

LISTEN 13 PLAY

Memorize your part, and then play through the tune with the recording as if you were performing it live. Keep your place in the form, and don't stop, whatever happens.

PERFORMANCE TIP

If you make a mistake or get lost, keep your composure, and pretend that everything is going fine. Listen to the other instruments, hear what chords they are playing, and find your way back into the form. You can even practice getting lost and then finding your place. Start the recording at a random point within the track, and then follow your ear.

Remember that keeping the groove is the most important thing. Simple bass lines using just the roots can be very effective.

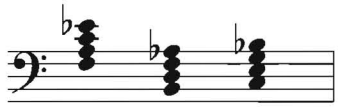
SUMMARY

FORM
12-BAR BLUES
(1 CHORUS = 12 BARS)

ARRANGEMENT
PICKUP: 2 BEATS DRUMS
2 CHORUS MELODY
2 CHORUS SOLO
1 CHORUS MELODY
END: 4 M.

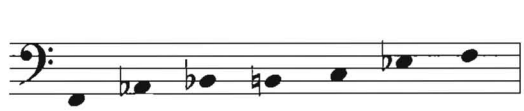
HARMONY

F7 B♭7 C7



SCALE

F BLUES

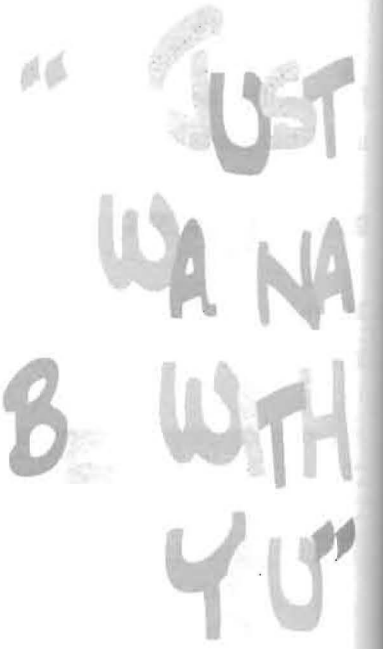


PLAY "DO IT NOW" WITH YOUR OWN BAND!

PLAYING BLUES SWING

CHAPTER III

"I Just Wanna Be With You" is a *blues swing. Swing* is a dance-oriented, big-band style from the 1930s. To hear more swing, listen to artists such as Count Basie, Benny Goodman, the Squirrel Nut Zippers, Diana Krall, Branford Marsalis, Kevin Eubanks, Joanne Brackeen, Cherry Poppin' Daddies, and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy.

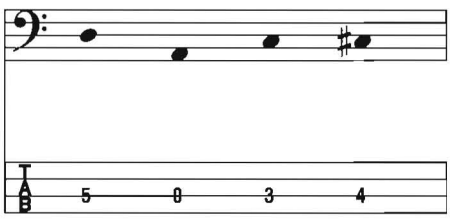


LESSON 9
TECHNIQUE/THEORY

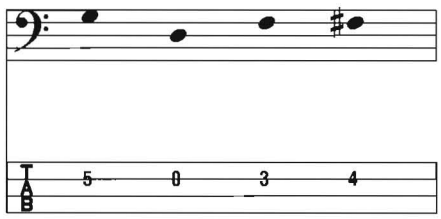
LISTEN 20 PLAY

Listen to "I Just Wanna Be With You," and play along with the recording. Try to match the bass part. The bass line to this tune has three parts:

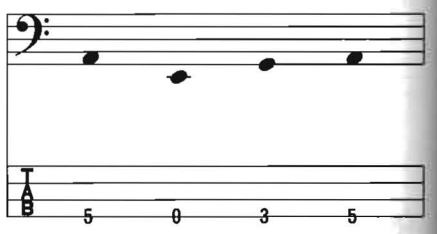
First Part



Second Part



Third Part



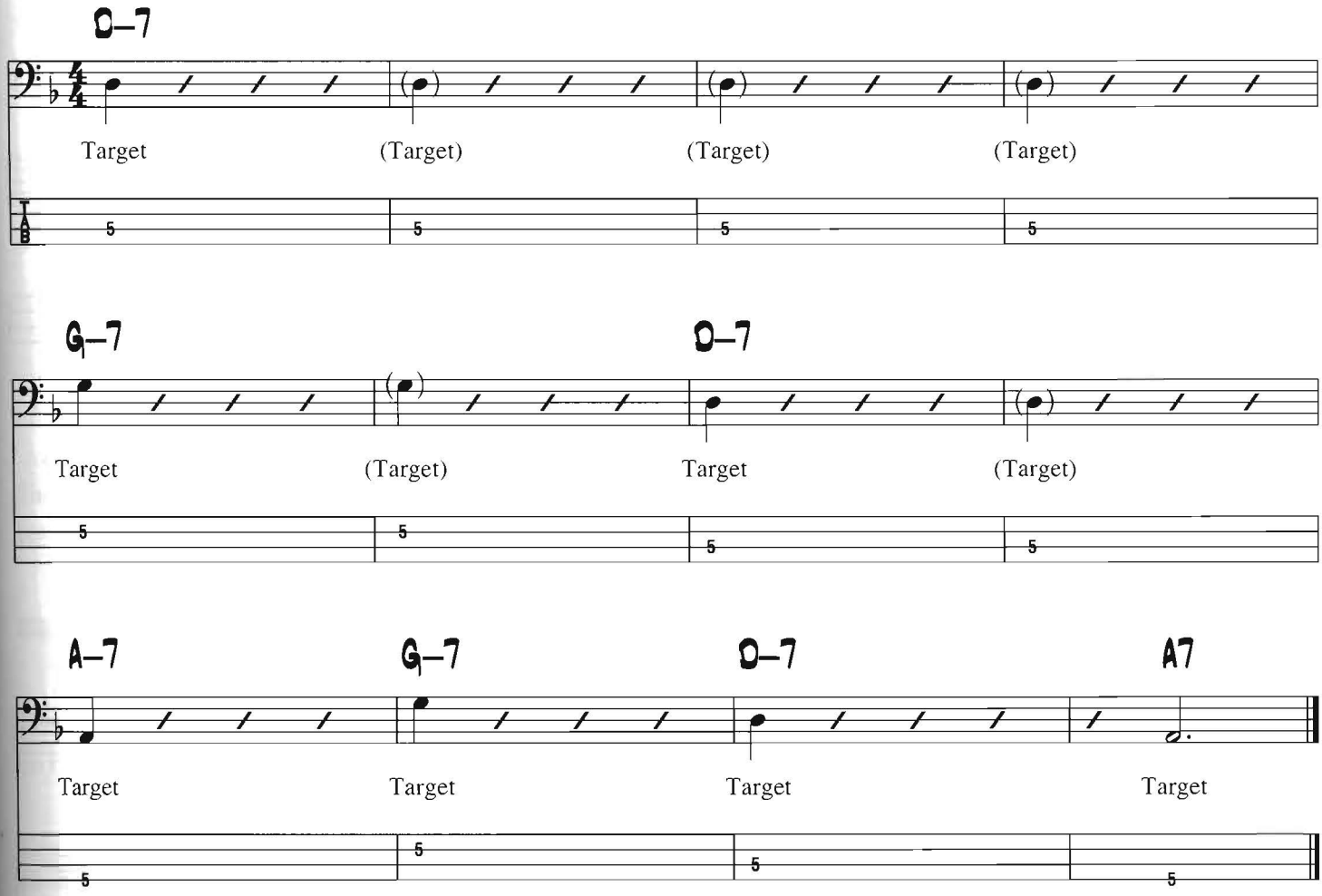
Notice that the three parts are similar. Hook up with the groove.

WALKING BASS LINES

The bass line to this tune uses steady quarter notes, and it has a swing feel. This type of bass line is called a *walking bass.*

Walking bass lines connect chords. The root of the chord you are walking towards is called a *target note.* The bass line *walks* from one target note to the next.

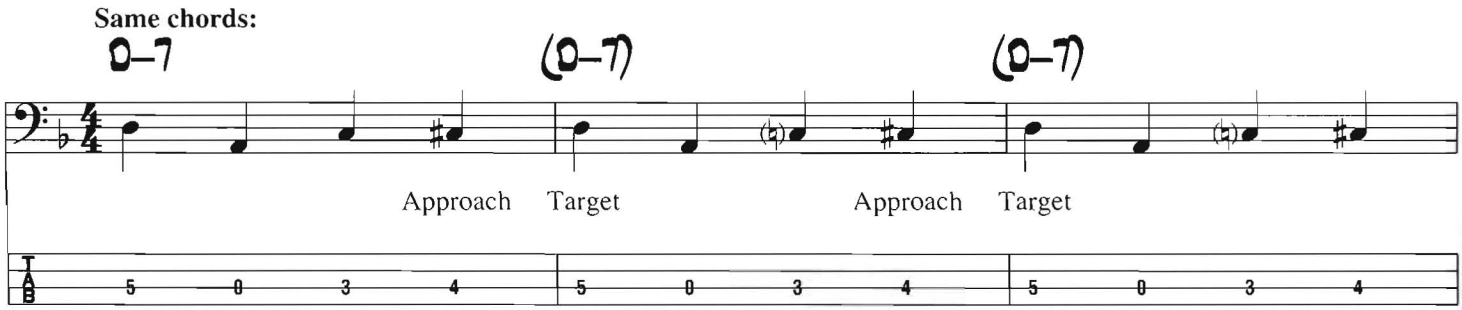
When you create a walking bass line, first review the lead sheet or chord chart and locate the chord changes. These are your targets. Here is a chart for "I Just Wanna Be With You" showing its target notes:



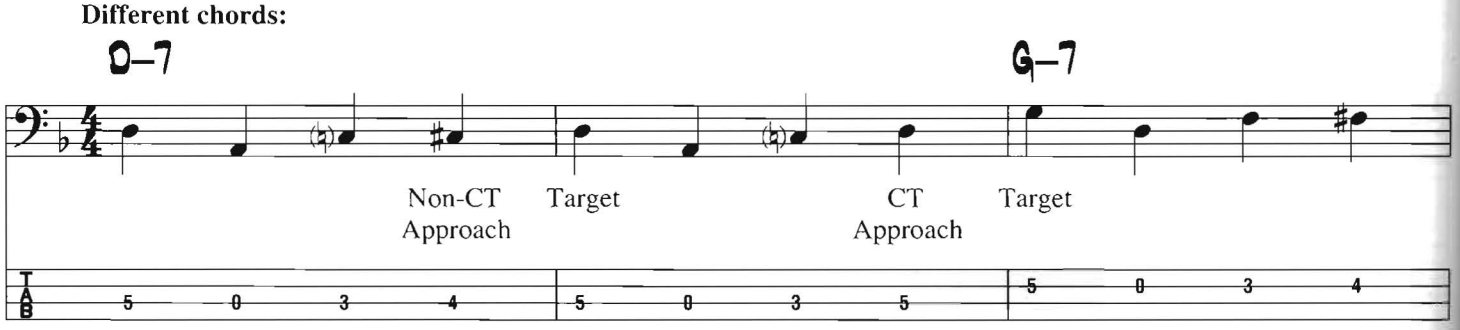
Chord roots are often played on the first beat of every measure, even when the measure doesn't have a new chord. The walking bass line approaches its targets using notes from scales, passing tones, and chord tones.

APPROACHING A NEW CHORD

The note before a target note is called an *approach note*. The recorded walking bass plays approach notes when going from one D–7 chord to another:



In this tune, when the bass line approaches a new chord, the lick changes. When the bass line walks from D–7 to G–7 (below, measure 2 to 3), the C♯ approach note is replaced with a D, which is a chord tone (it is the root of the D–7 chord and also the fifth of the G–7 chord). This change in the lick, using a chord-tone approach rather than a non-chord tone approach, makes moving to the new target more smooth:



LISTEN 21 PLAY

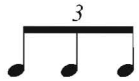
Listen to "I Just Wanna Be With You" and focus on the bass line. Notice how the walking riff changes when approaching new targets.

LESSON 10
LEARNING THE GROOVE

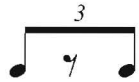
HOOKING UP TO SWING

Listen to "I Just Wanna Be With You" and focus on the cymbals. This tune is a shuffle, like "Do It Now." There is a triplet feel under each beat. The main difference is that in this tune, the middle triplet of each beat is left out. This is common in swing.

Shuffle
("Do It Now")



Swing Shuffle
("I Just Wanna...")



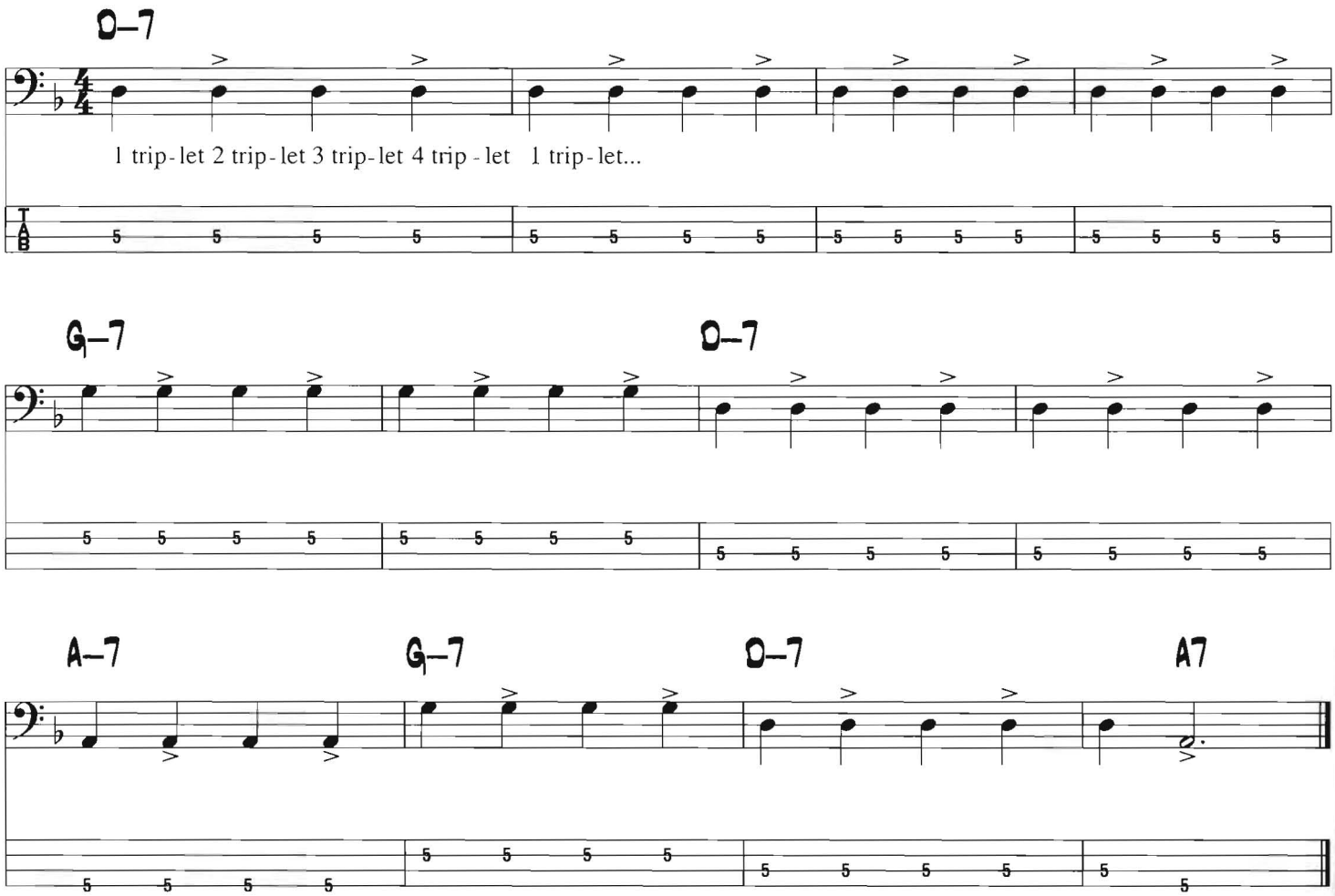
This syncopated "push-pull" feel is basic to jazz and r&b. Sometimes this feel is called a "double shuffle" because the drummer plays the same rhythm with both hands.

LISTEN 21 PLAY

Listen to the head to "I Just Wanna Be With You" and focus on the bass and drums. What kind of rhythm is each playing? Where is the triplet?

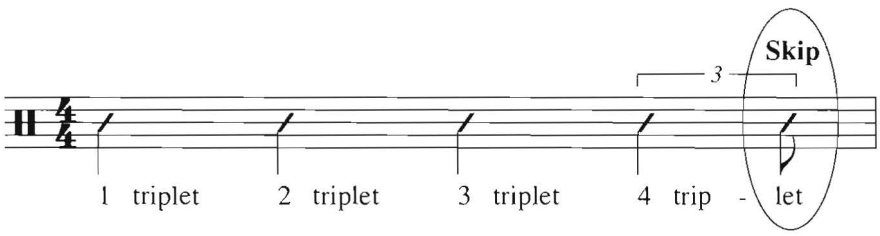
Play this simple bass line of chord roots along with the head to "I Just Wanna Be With You." Hit each beat exactly with the drums. Accent beats 2 and 4, and think "1 trip-let, 2 trip-let, . . ." under each beat. (A ">" mark above a note means "accent" or "a little louder.")

LISTEN 22 PLAY



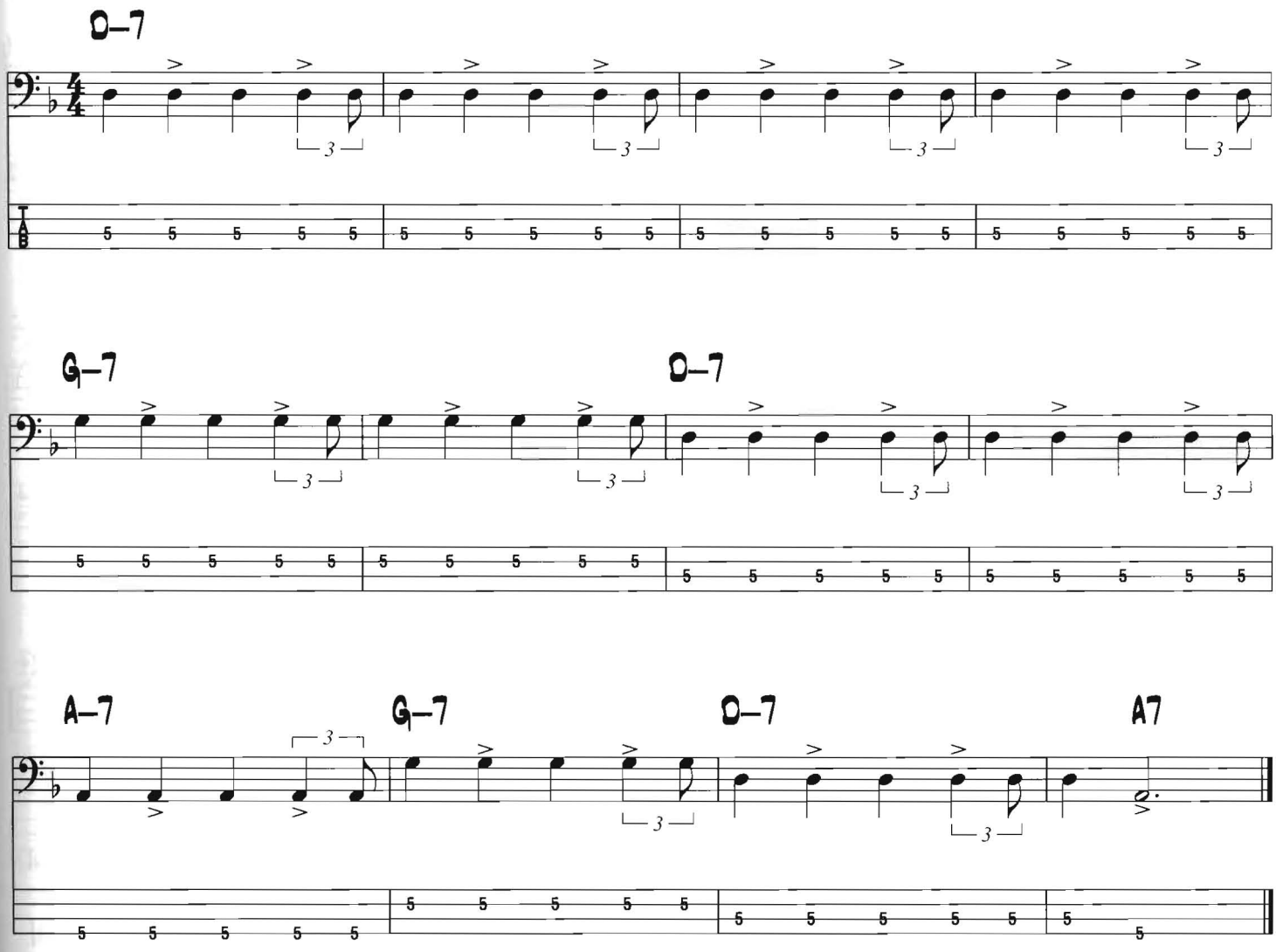
SKIPS

Though walking bass lines mostly use steady quarter notes, you can also include notes that hook up with the triplet feel. A common place for this is the last triplet note of a measure's last beat. This is called a *skip*.



Play along with the track again, but this time, play a skip on every fourth beat. Play your skip at exactly the same time as they are hit by the hi-hat or other cymbals.

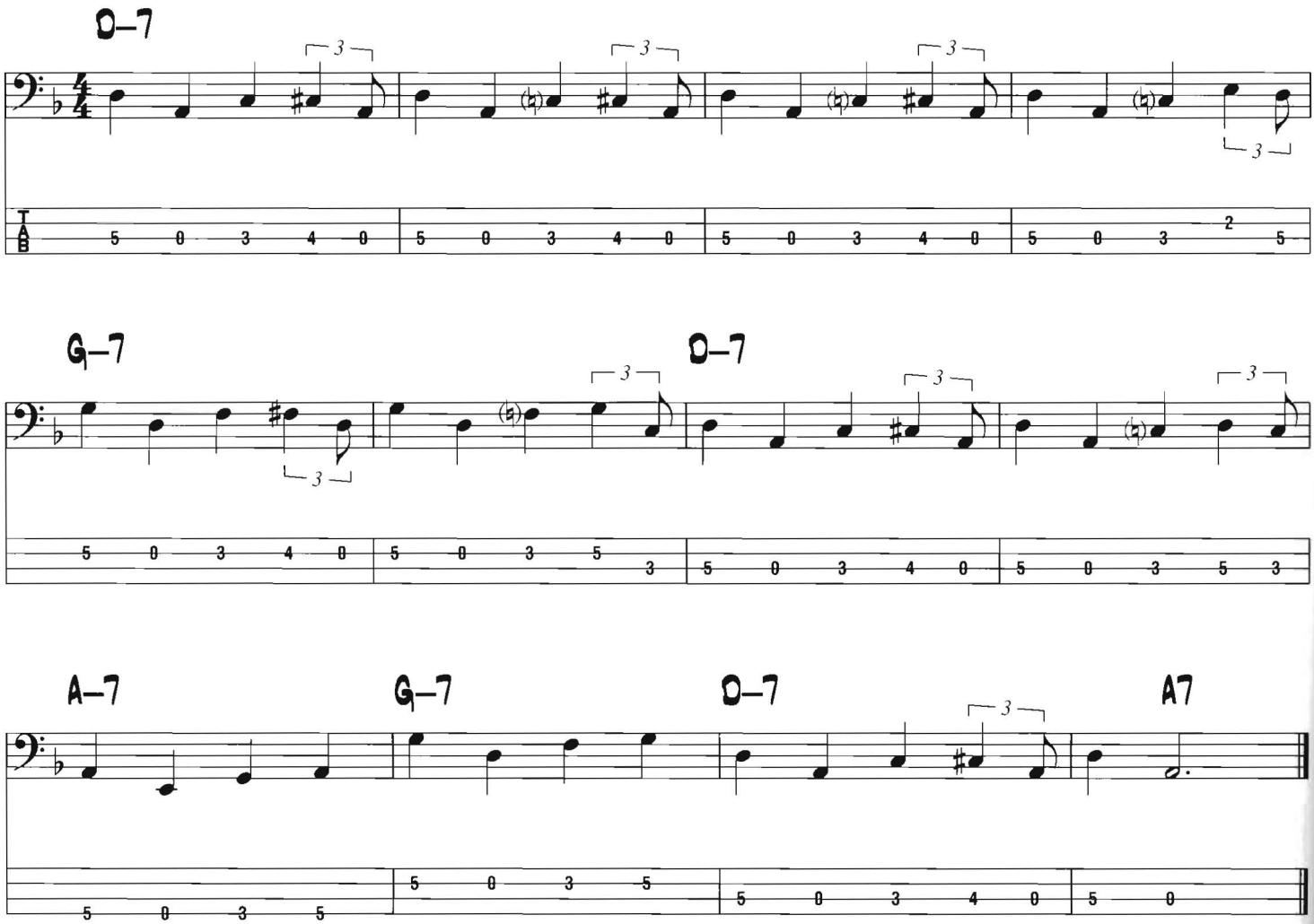
LISTEN 22 PLAY



In this example, every measure has a skip. When you create your own bass lines, you can use them less regularly—every other measure, once per phrase, at the end of the form, or whenever you think they will sound good. You can play them on other beats besides the last one—beat 2 is a good choice too. You can repeat the note, play a different note from the chord or scale, or even just slap the string. Rhythm is the most important element here, not the pitches.

Play the recorded line along with the recording, but skip on the last beat.

LISTEN 22 PLAY



Using skips and an accented backbeat will really make your walking bass lines swing.

PRACTICE TIP

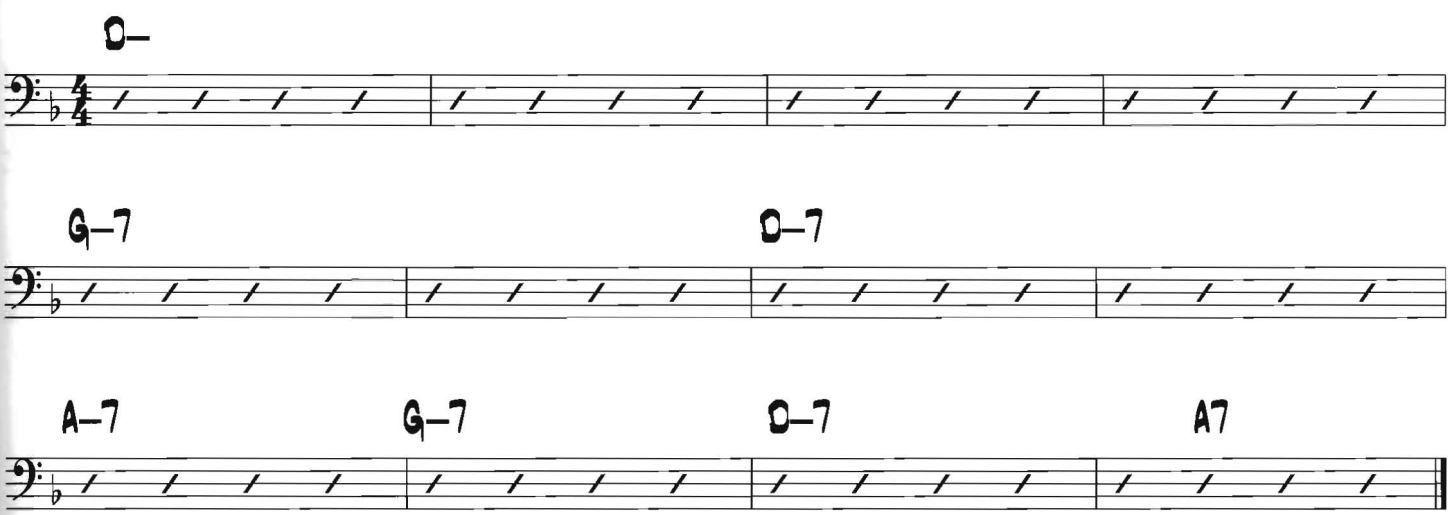
Dance with your bass. Look at yourself in the mirror, as you play. Watch good dancers, when you are playing live. They'll get you in the right mood.

LESSON 11
IMPROVISATION

FORM AND ARRANGEMENT

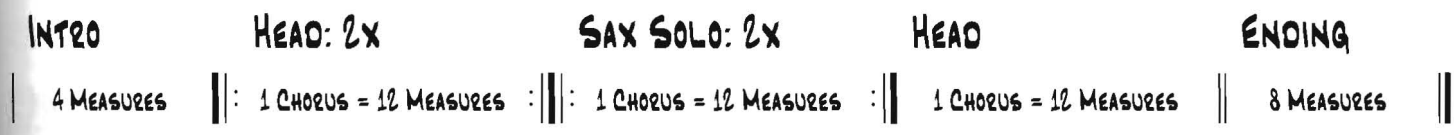
Listen to "I Just Wanna Be With You" and follow the form. This tune is another 12-bar blues. The form of each chorus is twelve measures long and divided into three phrases, just like "Do It Now."

LISTEN 20 PLAY



Listen to "I Just Wanna Be With You" and focus on the introduction and the ending. What part of the form did these added sections come from?

This is the arrangement used on the recording:



The intro and ending come from the form's last four measures. On the recording, the band chose to play the ending twice. This kind of repeated ending is called a *tag ending*.

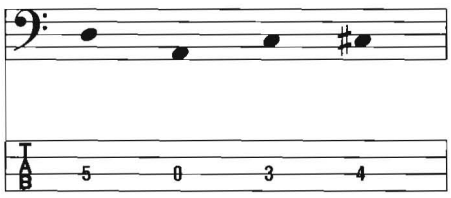
PERFORMANCE TIP

Sometimes, a band may decide to "tag a tune" (play a tag ending) several times, building energy with each repetition. If things are going well and everyone is in the mood, a band may even make an ending longer than the rest of the tune. This is a place where people really let loose and have fun playing. When you listen to music, pay attention to what a band is doing at the end of a tune.

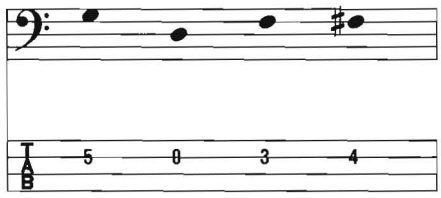
IDEAS FOR IMPROVISATION: TRANSPOSING LICKS

As you have seen, the recorded bass line has three parts:

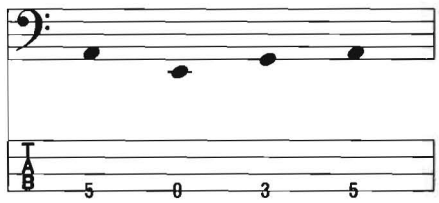
First Part



Second Part



Third Part

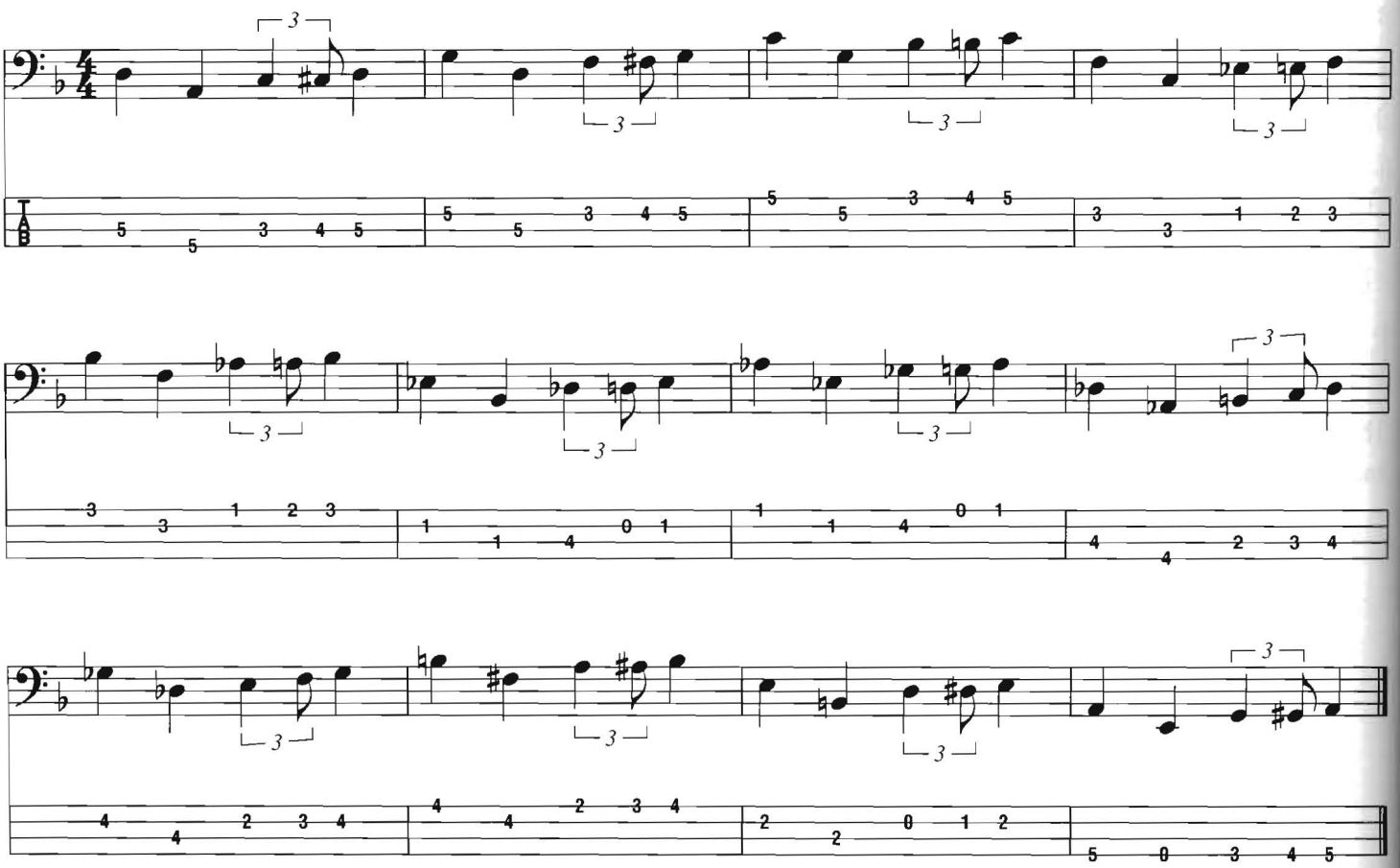


As you may have guessed from playing the tune, it is really just one lick, though it starts on different notes. Each lick has the same shape; the notes are spaced the same distances apart. This is called *transposition*. Transposition means moving a lick or a melody (also called a *motif*) from one set of notes to another.

The motif in this tune is transposed so that it will sound good under each of the chords. This is a good technique for creating solid walking bass lines. It is also easy to play—your fingerings are the same, just moved to a new fret or string.

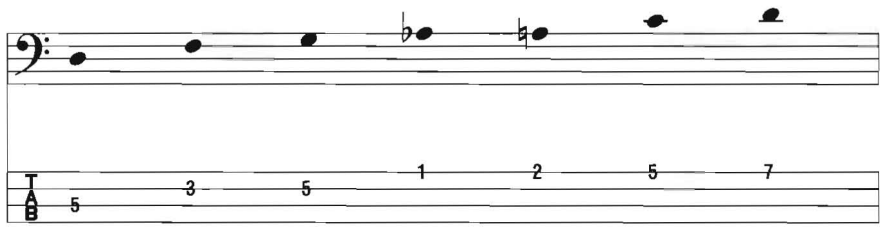
Transposition Practice

Practice transposing this tune's motif.



SCALE

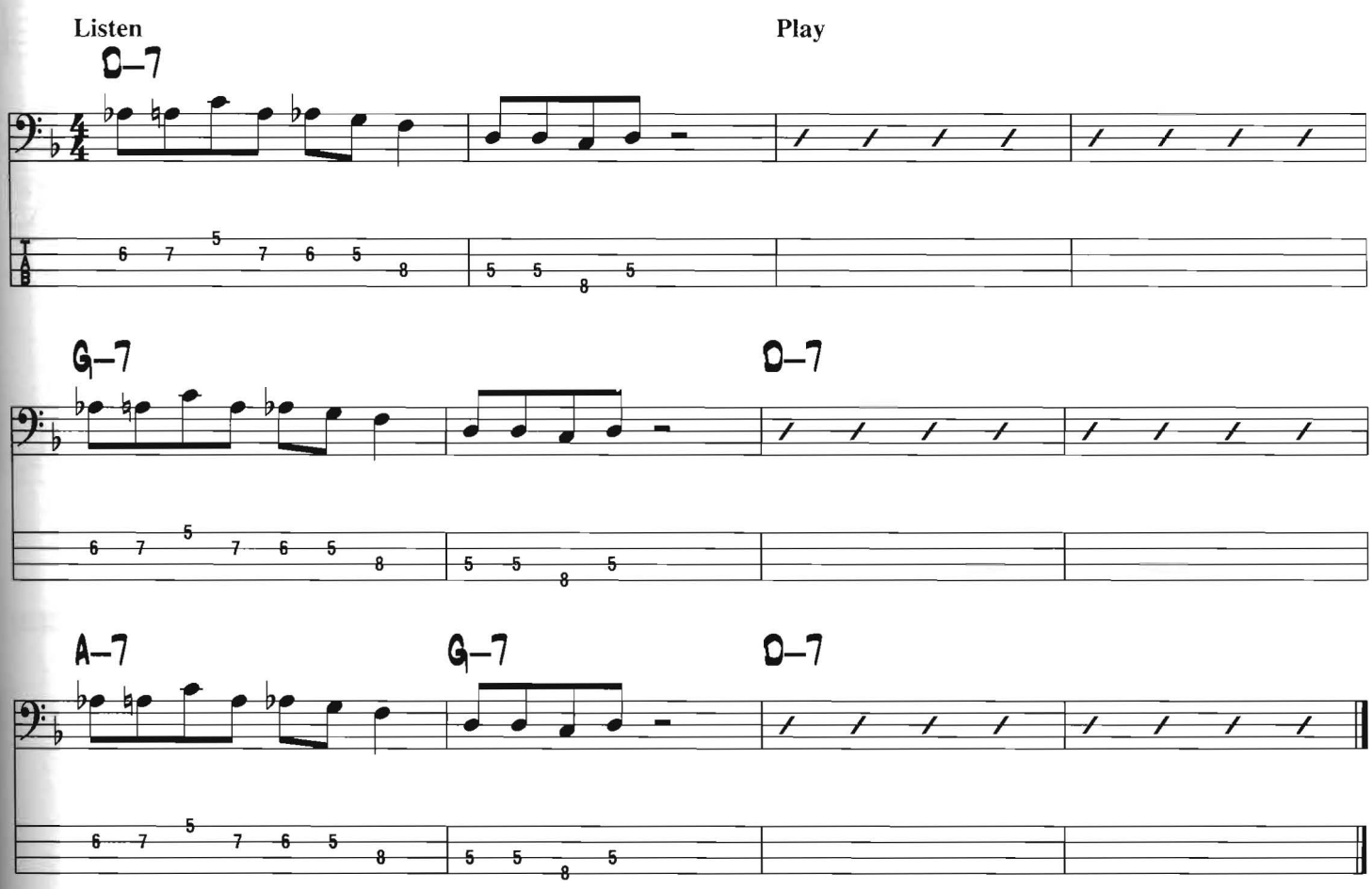
For this tune, use the D blues scale.



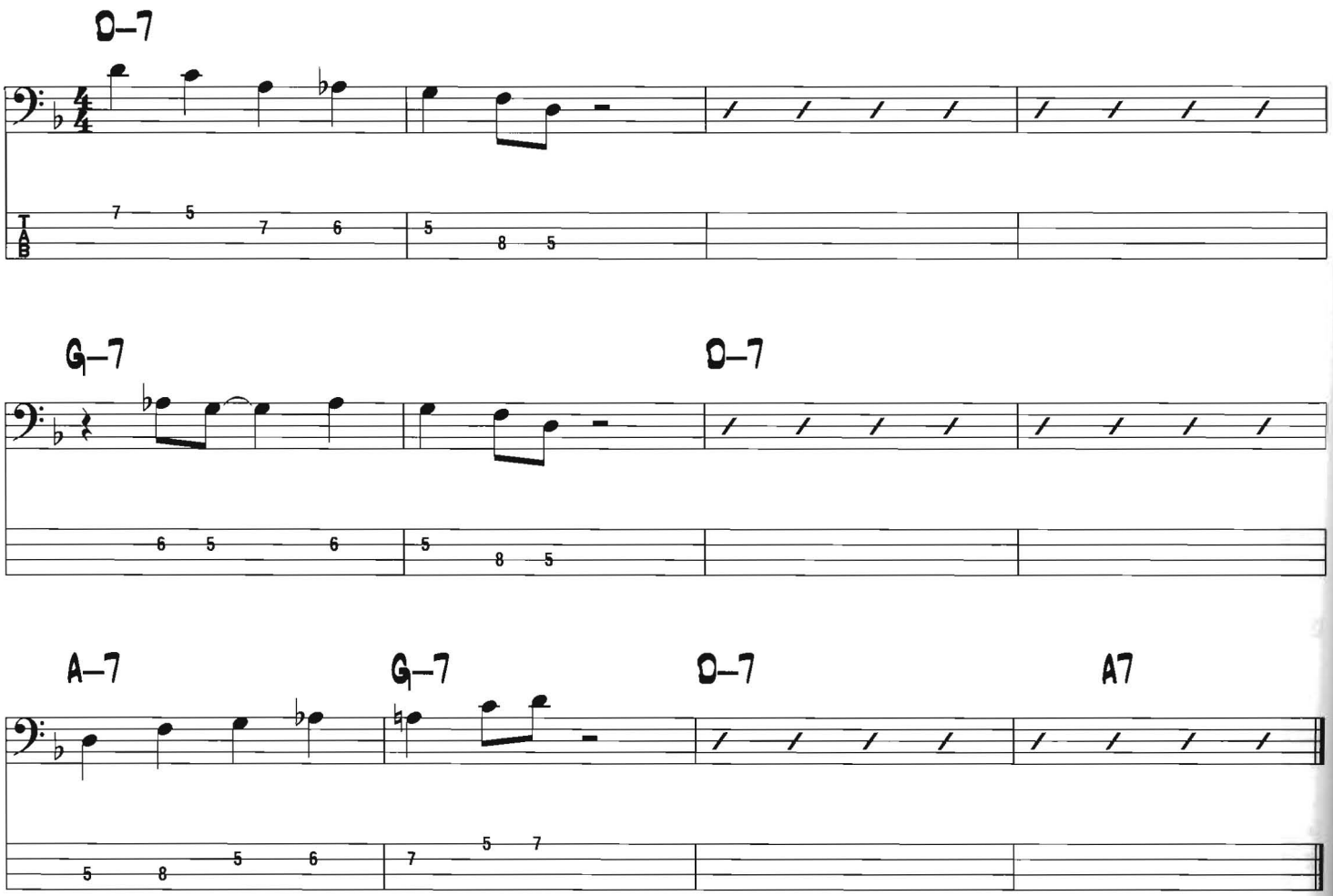
CALL AND RESPONSE

1. Echo each phrase, exactly as you hear it. Notice how the same phrase can sound good over different chords.
2. Improvise an answer to each phrase. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the phrase you hear, and use the notes from the D blues scale.

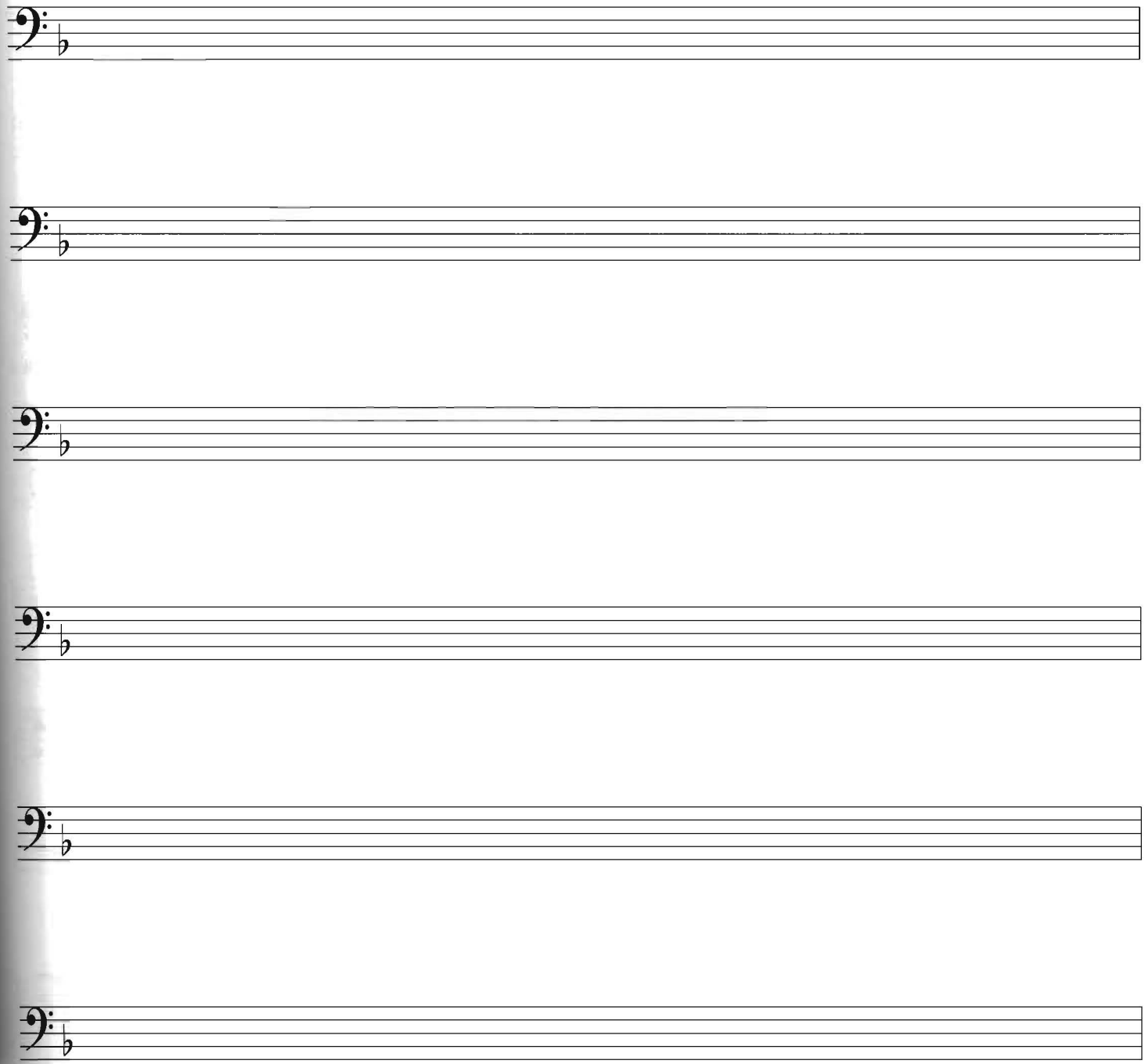
LISTEN 23 PLAY



LISTEN 24 PLAY



Write out a few of your own ideas for bass lines, using any of the techniques you have learned.



LISTEN 22 PLAY

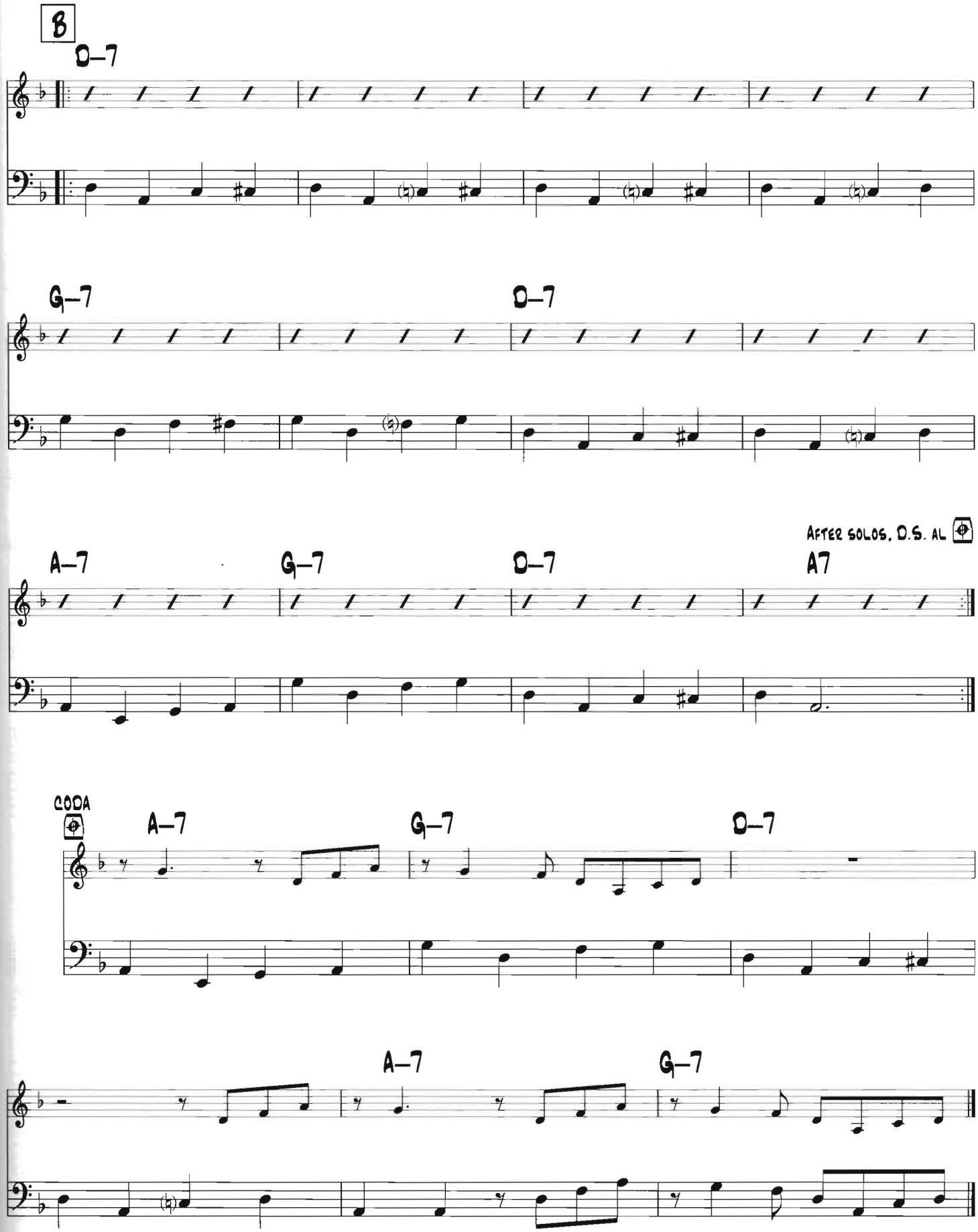
Create a solo using any licks you have played. Memorize your solo, and practice it along with the recording.

LESSON 12
READING

BASS PART

Play "I Just Wanna Be With You" while reading from the written bass part. Play it as written.

LISTEN 22 PLAY


B
D–7
G–7
D–7
AFTER SOLOS, D.S. AL
A–7
G–7
D–7
A7
CODA
A–7
G–7
D–7
A–7
G–7

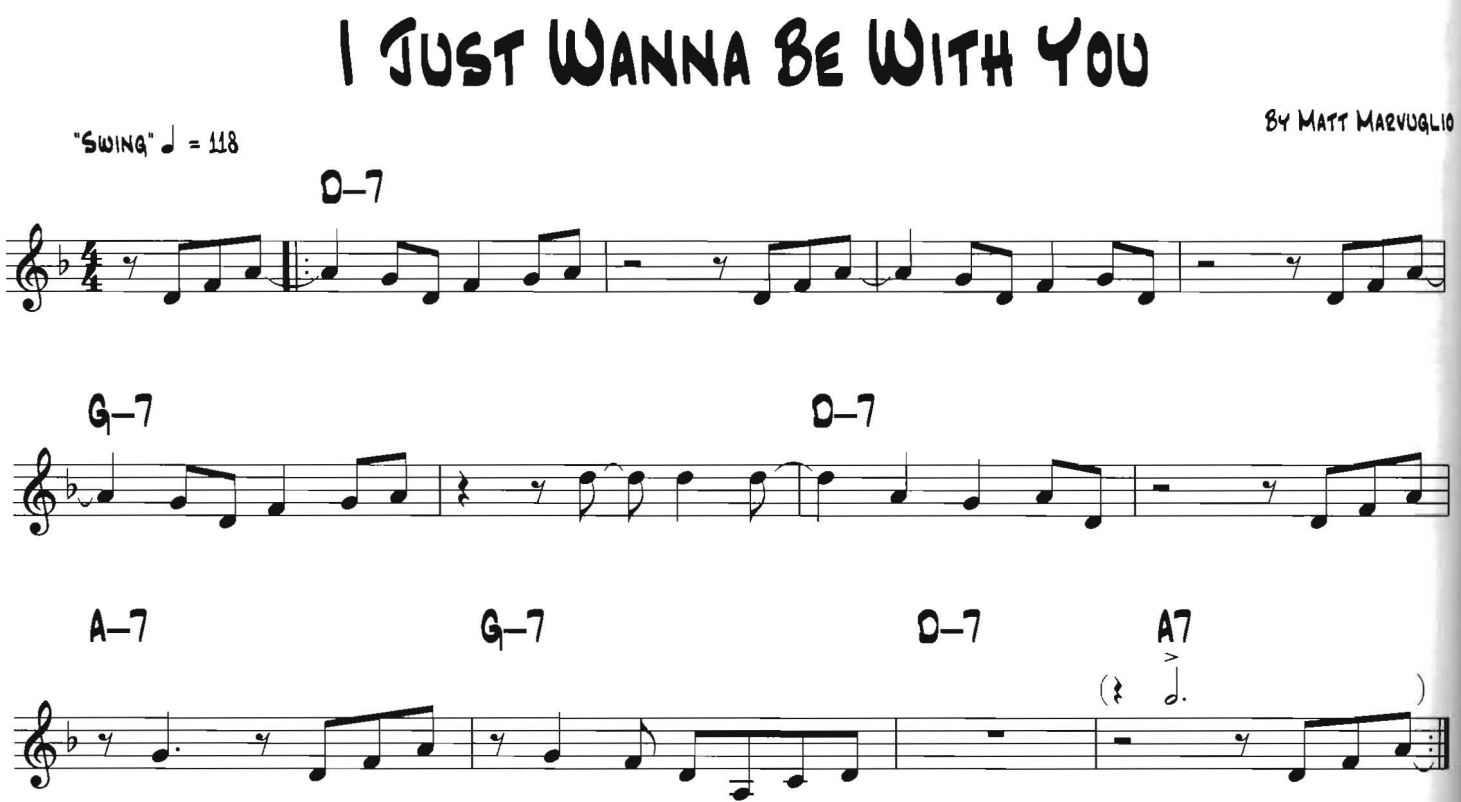
LEAD SHEET

Now play "I Just Wanna Be With You" from the lead sheet, using your own walking bass line. There are two new notation issues here:

(𝄽 𝅗𝅥.) Break your walking line when you see this (last measure) and play this rhythm instead (usually on the chord root).

INTRO/ENDING Though this lead sheet doesn't show an introduction or an ending, you and your band should create your own. The intro can be just drums, as you saw in "Do It Now," or it can come from the last line of the tune, as it does in the recording of this tune. Tag the ending at least three times, repeating the last four measures of the written part.

LISTEN 22 PLAY

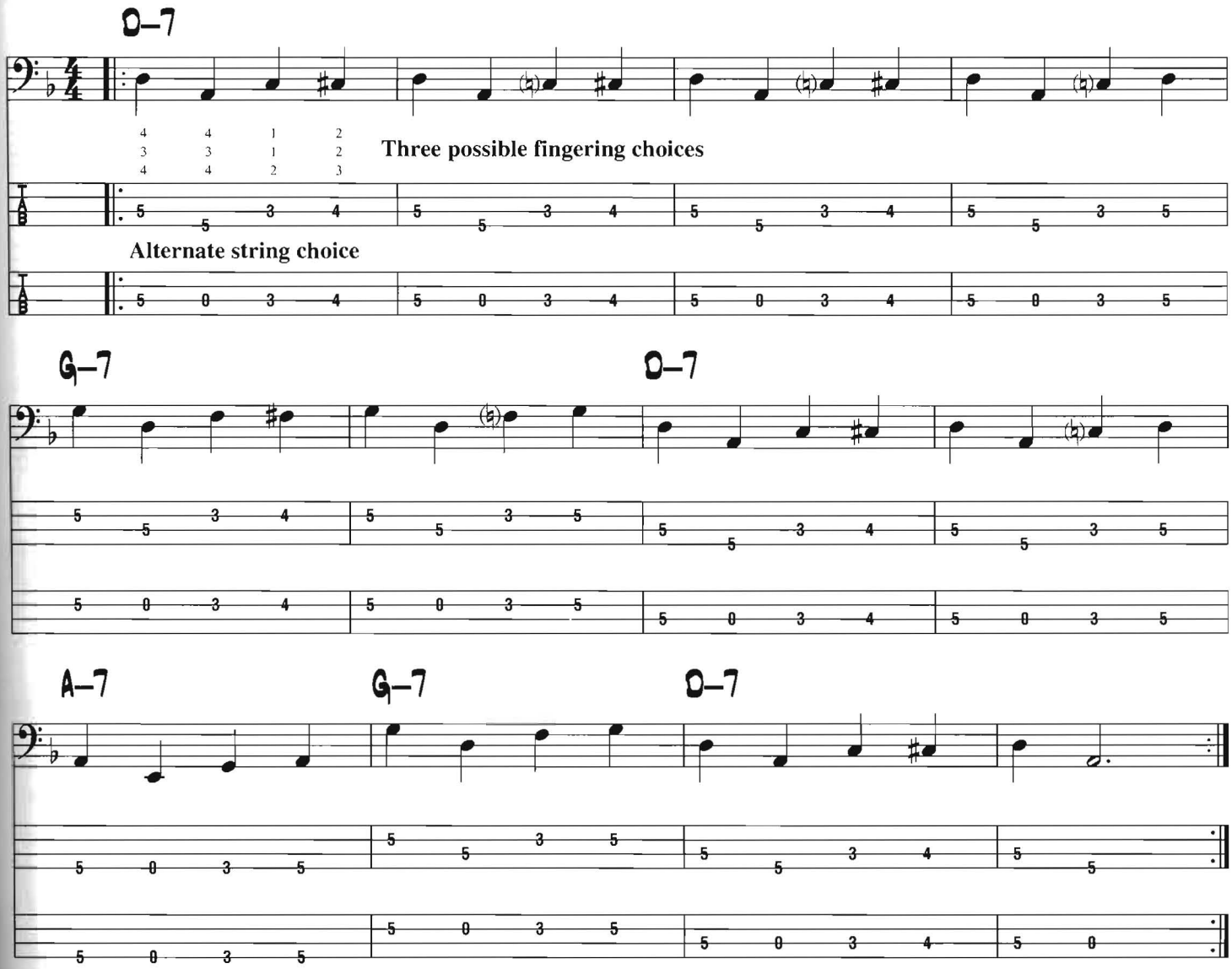


CHAPTER III
DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE

ALTERNATE FINGERINGS

There are many ways to play the riff to "I Just Wanna Be With You." When you are learning any new tune, try fingering it in several ways. Choose the sound that you like best, and the hand position that feels most comfortable. Practice them with the recording.

LISTEN 22 PLAY



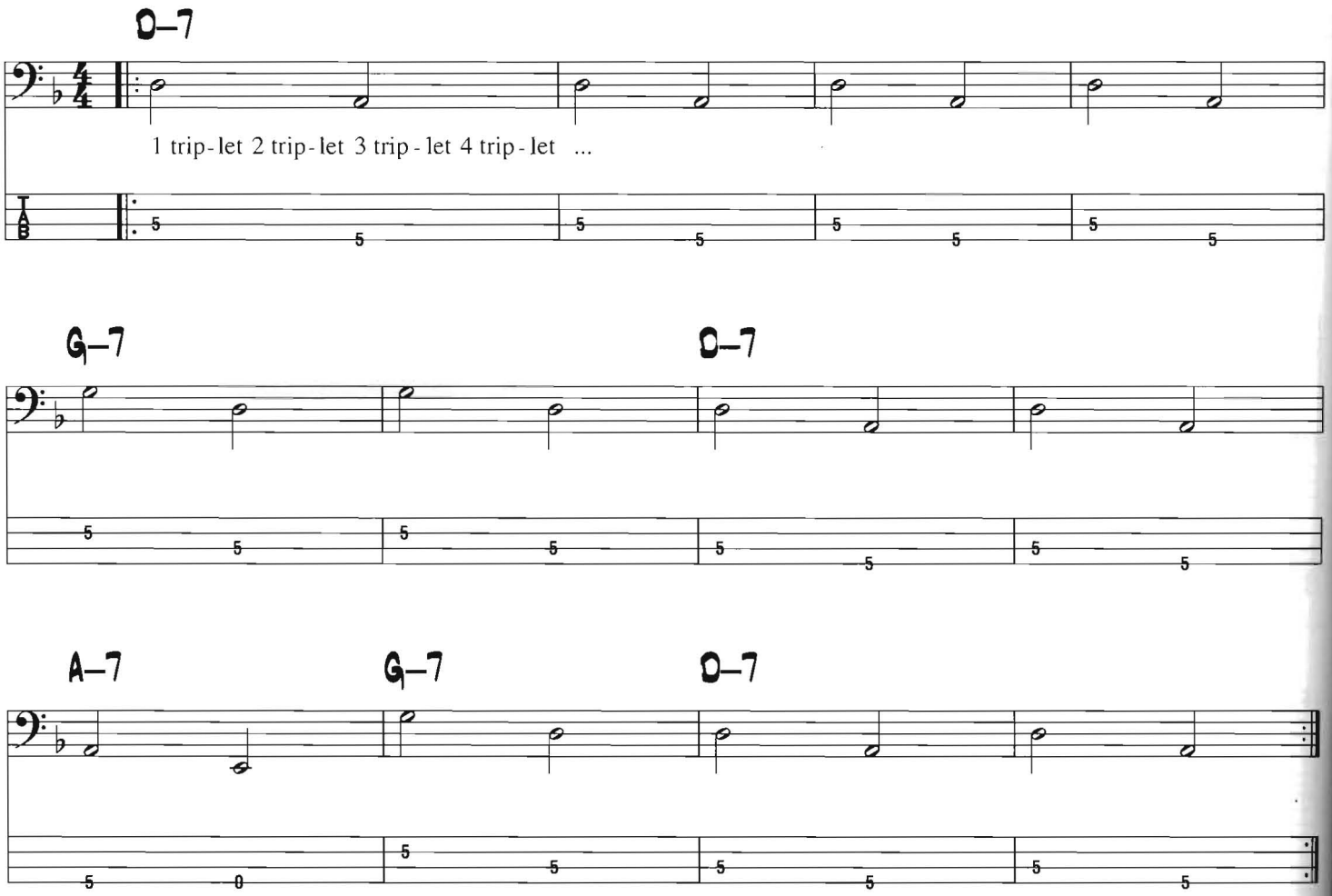
CHALLENGE

What other string choices can you find for these licks?

TWO-FEEL PRACTICE

Play this bass part along with the head. It has a *two feel.* This means that the half note gets the pulse, rather than the quarter note. As you play, say "1-trip-let, 2-trip-let, . . ." on every beat.

LISTEN 21 PLAY



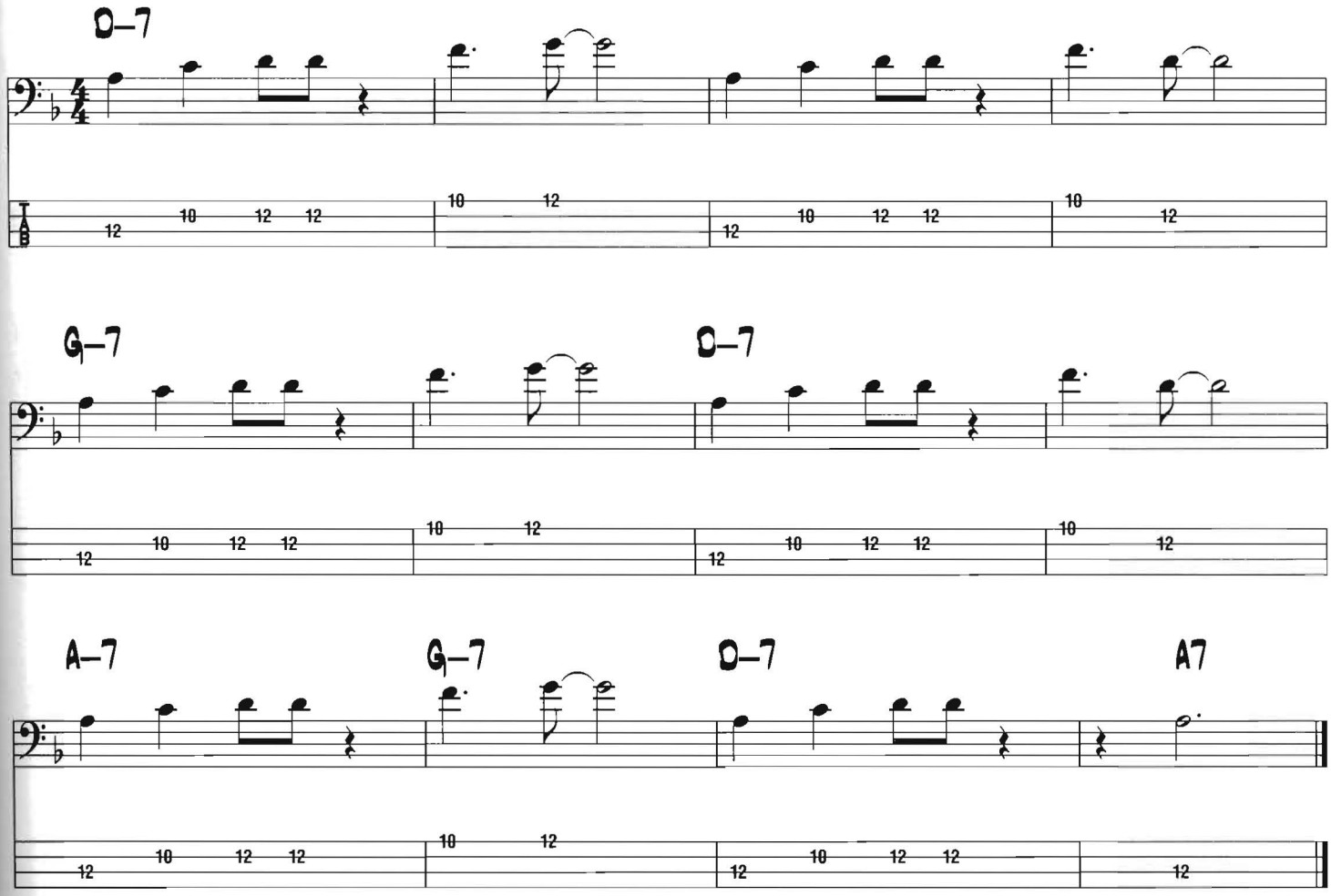
PERFORMANCE TIP

When you play this or other tunes that use a walking bass line, play some choruses with a two feel. It makes the return of the walking line very exciting. It is also a good way of adding contrast, particularly when there are several choruses of solos.

SOLO

Practice this solo along with the recording.

LISTEN 22 PLAY



LISTEN 22 PLAY

Create a solo using any licks you have played. Memorize your solo, and practice it along with the recording.

MEMORIZE

Create a new bass line and solo to "I Just Wanna Be With You." Practice it with the recording, and memorize it.

LISTEN 22 PLAY

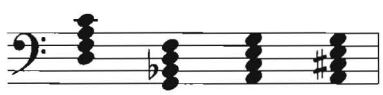
SUMMARY

FORM
12-BAR BLUES
(1 CHORUS = 12 BARS)

ARRANGEMENT
INTRO: 4M.
2 CHORUS MELODY
2 CHORUS SOLO
1 CHORUS MELODY
END: 8 M.

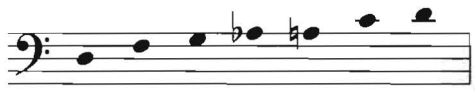
HARMONY

D–7 G–7 A–7 A7



SCALE

D BLUES



PLAY "I JUST WANNA BE WITH YOU" WITH YOUR OWN BAND!

PLAYING FUNK

CHAPTER IV

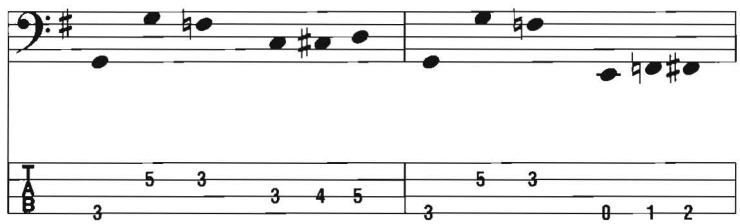
"Leave Me Alone" is a *funk* tune. Funk has its roots in New Orleans street music. It started in the 1970s, and is a combination of rock, r&b, Motown, jazz, and blues. Funk has also influenced many rap artists. To hear more funk, listen to artists such as James Brown, Tower of Power, Kool and the Gang, the Yellowjackets, Chaka Khan, Tina Turner, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

LESSON 13
TECHNIQUE/THEORY

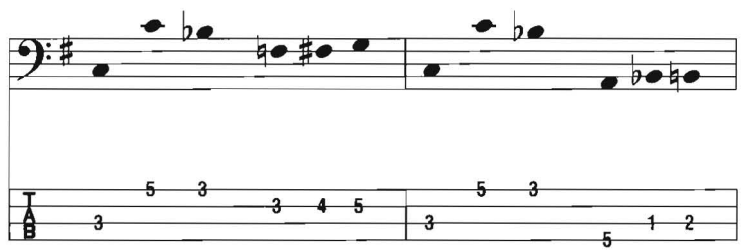
LISTEN 25 PLAY

Listen to "Leave Me Alone," and play along with the recording. Try to match the bass. This is another blues with a three-part bass line:

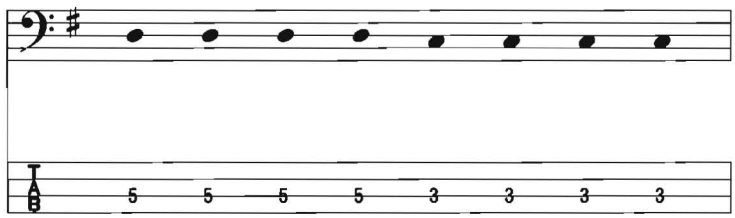
Here is the first part:



Here is the second part:



Here is the third part:

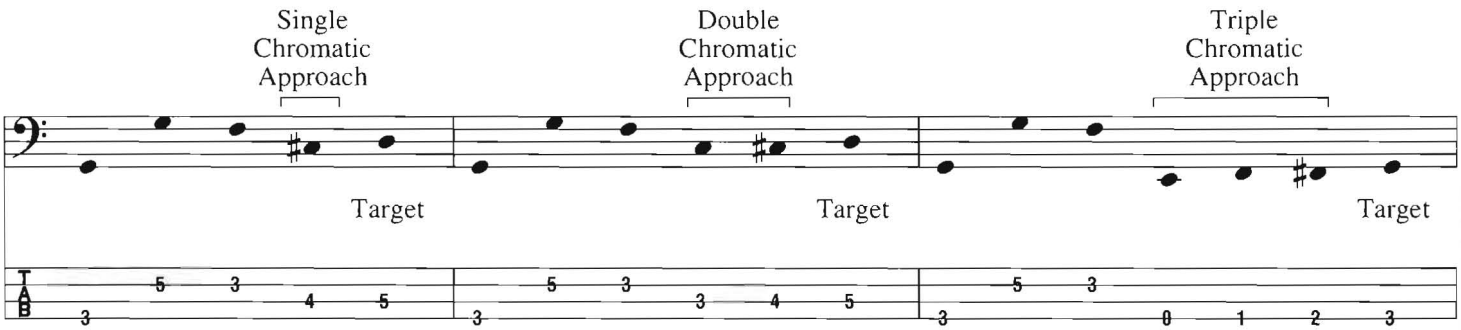


The form is the same as the other blues tunes you have played, but the funk groove is new.

BASS LINE

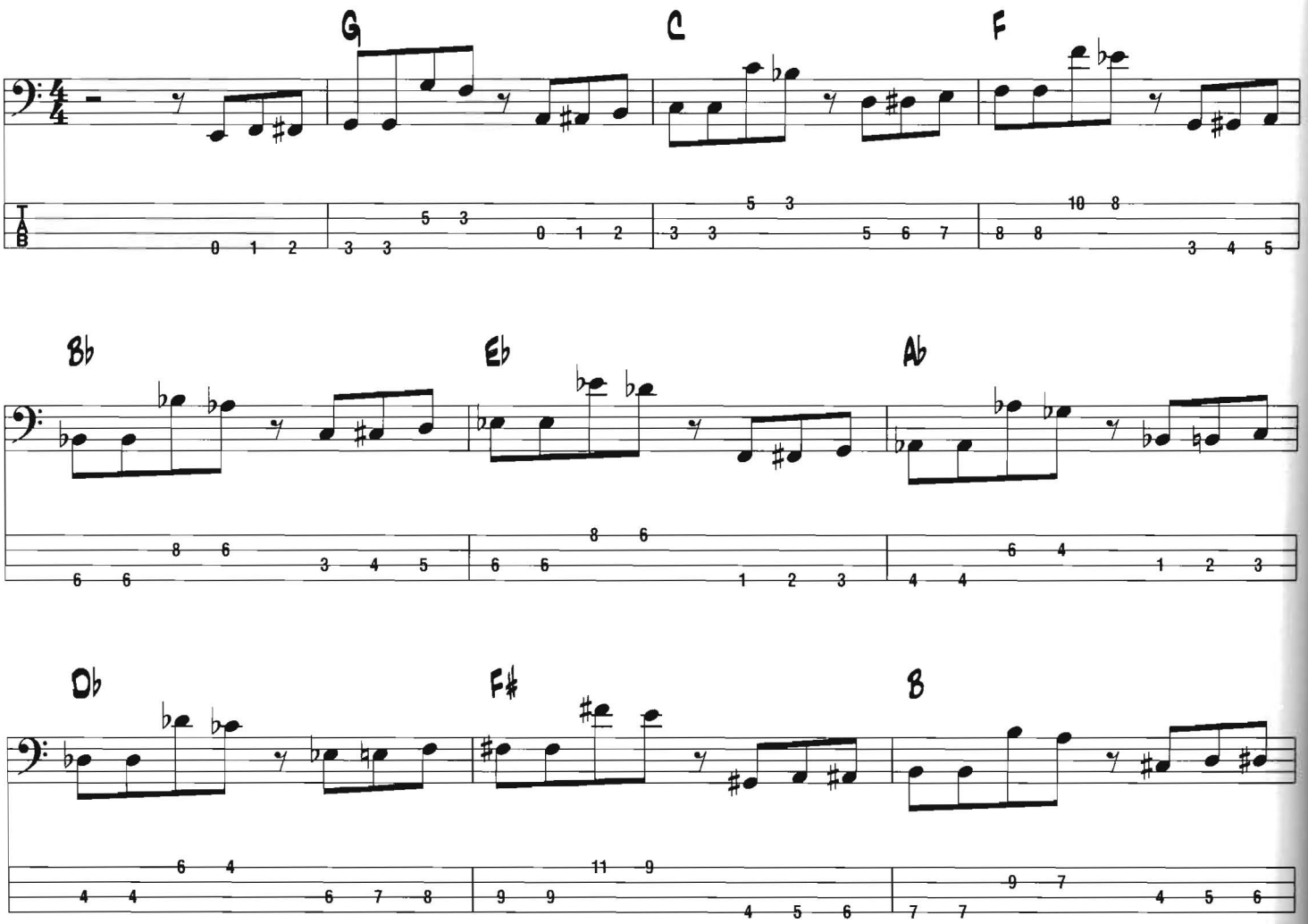
Chromatic Approaches

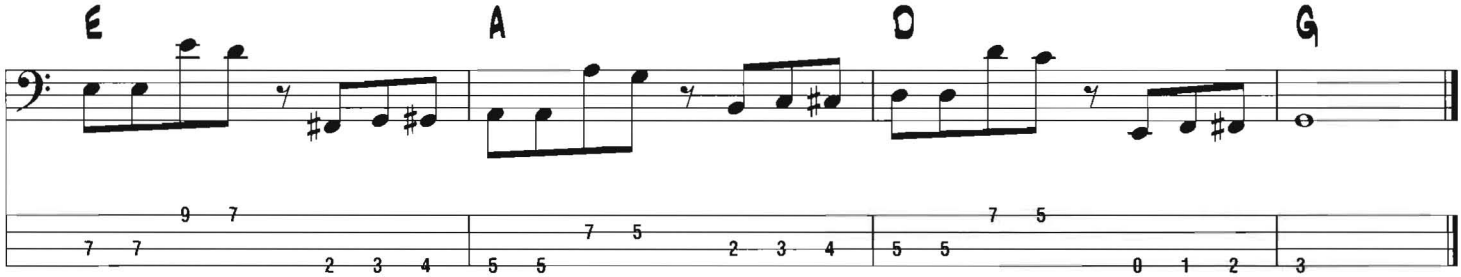
This bass line has *chromatic approaches* (half-step runs leading to a target note). Fingering chromatics is easy because the notes are right next to each other on the fingerboard.



Chromatic Approach Practice

This exercise will help you play chromatic approaches to target notes.



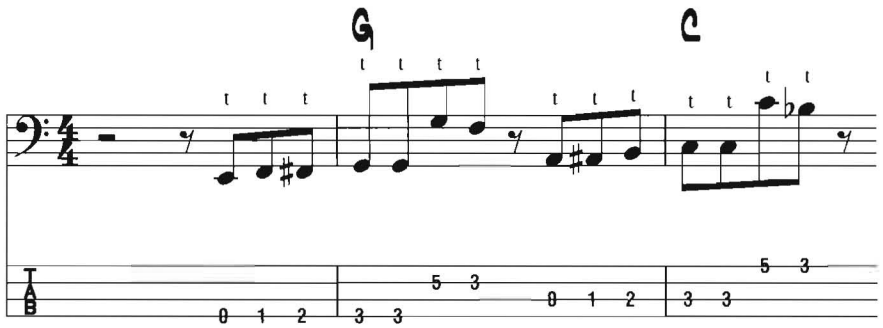


Thumb Slaps

Another way to get some funky new sounds out of your bass is with *thumb slaps*. Finger the note with your left hand, but slap the string with your right thumb instead of plucking it with your fingers.

Listen to the thumb slaps on the recording, and then practice this technique on your own. When you are ready, try the above exercise again, using thumb slaps on the chromatic approach notes. They are often notated with a "t."

LISTEN 26 PLAY



LESSON 14
LEARNING THE GROOVE

HOOKING UP TO FUNK

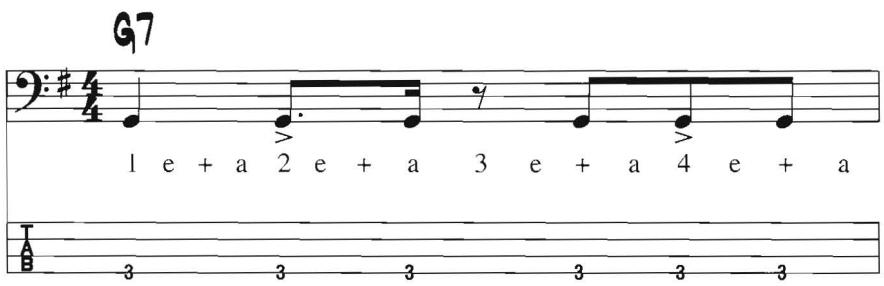
Listen to "Leave Me Alone." This funk groove has its roots in New Orleans street music—funky march music played on marching instruments (snare drums, bass drums, and so on) still found in the Mardi Gras parades each spring. Many New Orleans artists were important to the development of funk.

Funk rhythms are played with less of a swing feel than blues. There is an underlying sixteenth note feel, similar to rock. Beats 2 and 4 are often accented, usually by the snare drum.

While you listen, tap your foot with the bass drum on beats 1 and 3. Tap your lap with the snare drum on beats 2 and 4. Tap your desk with the cymbals on every sixteenth note (four per beat). One of the bass notes is on the last sixteenth note of a beat. Which one?

When you have the feel, play the bass line rhythms using just the chord roots. Count out the rhythms as you play each beat.

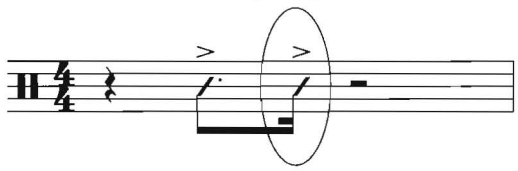
LISTEN 25 PLAY



SYNCOPATION

The bass hooks up with the sixteenth-note feel on beat 2, though only on the last sixteenth of the beat. Playing a note here interrupts the regular pulse. This is called *syncopation*. Like the accents on beats 2 and 4, and the sixteenth note, syncopated feel is also common in funk.

Syncopation

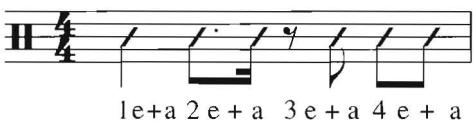


This second beat makes the groove unique. Which other instruments play syncopations?

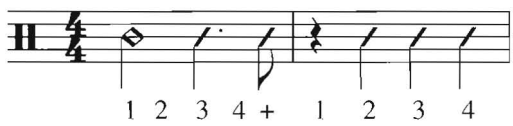
PRACTICE TIP

It is easier to hear and play a syncopated line than it is to read it. Here is a trick to help you read them accurately: double the note values, and then double the tempo:

Written:



Doubled:



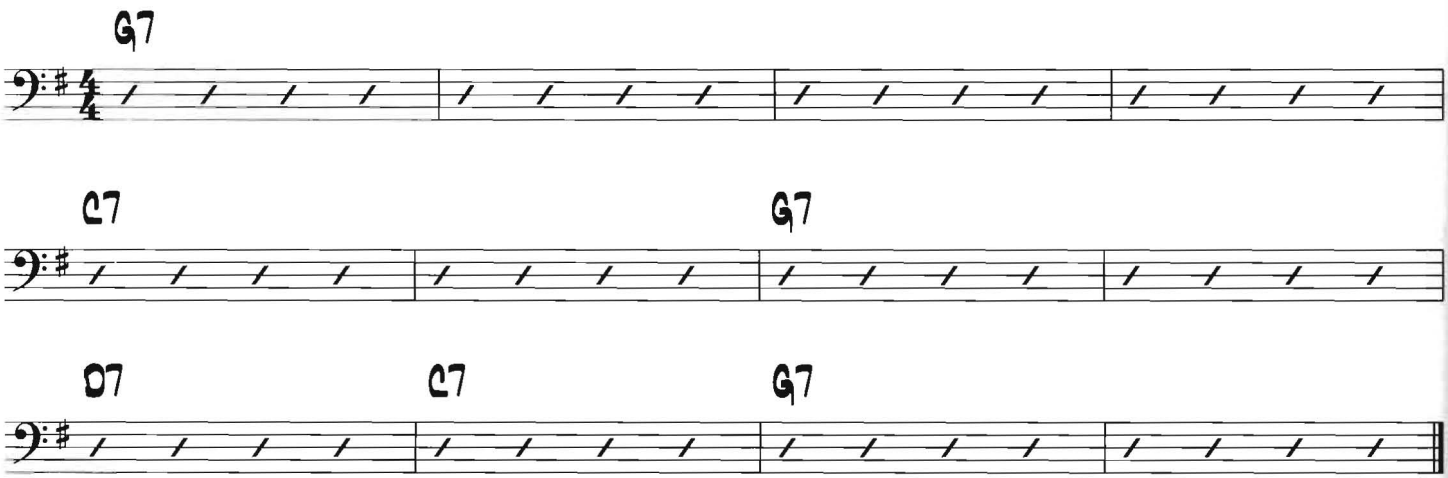
The doubled version may be easier to read. If you play it twice as fast as you would the written version, they will sound the same.

LESSON 15
IMPROVISATION

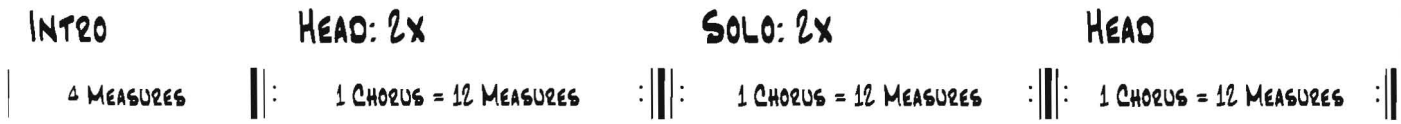
FORM AND ARRANGEMENT

Listen to "Leave Me Alone" and follow the form. This funk tune follows the 12-bar blues form.

LISTEN 25 PLAY

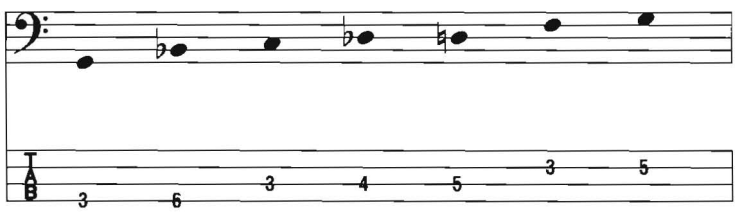


On the recording, the arrangement begins with a four-measure introduction, featuring the rhythm section playing the groove.



IDEAS FOR IMPROVISING BASS LINES

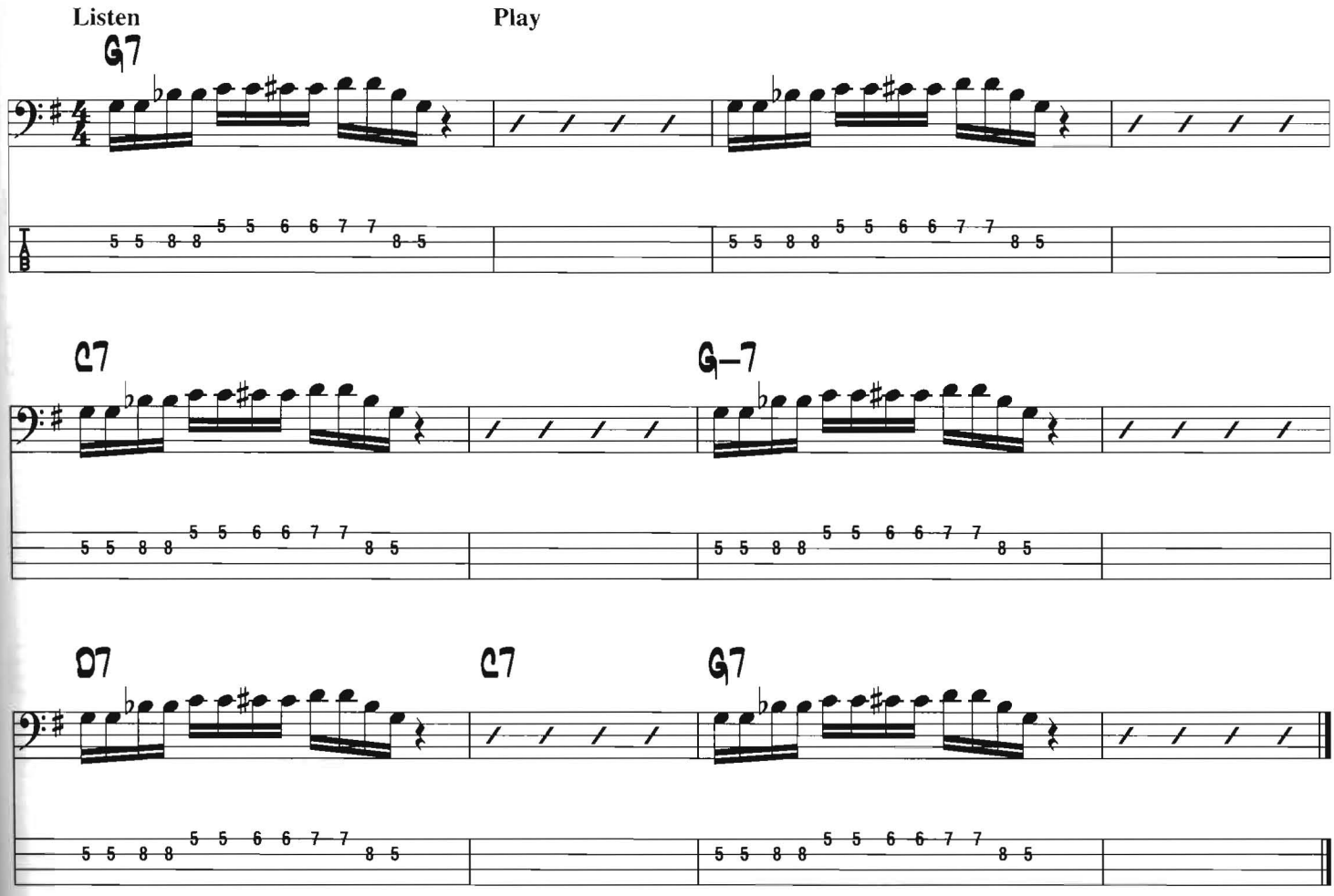
SCALE: G BLUES



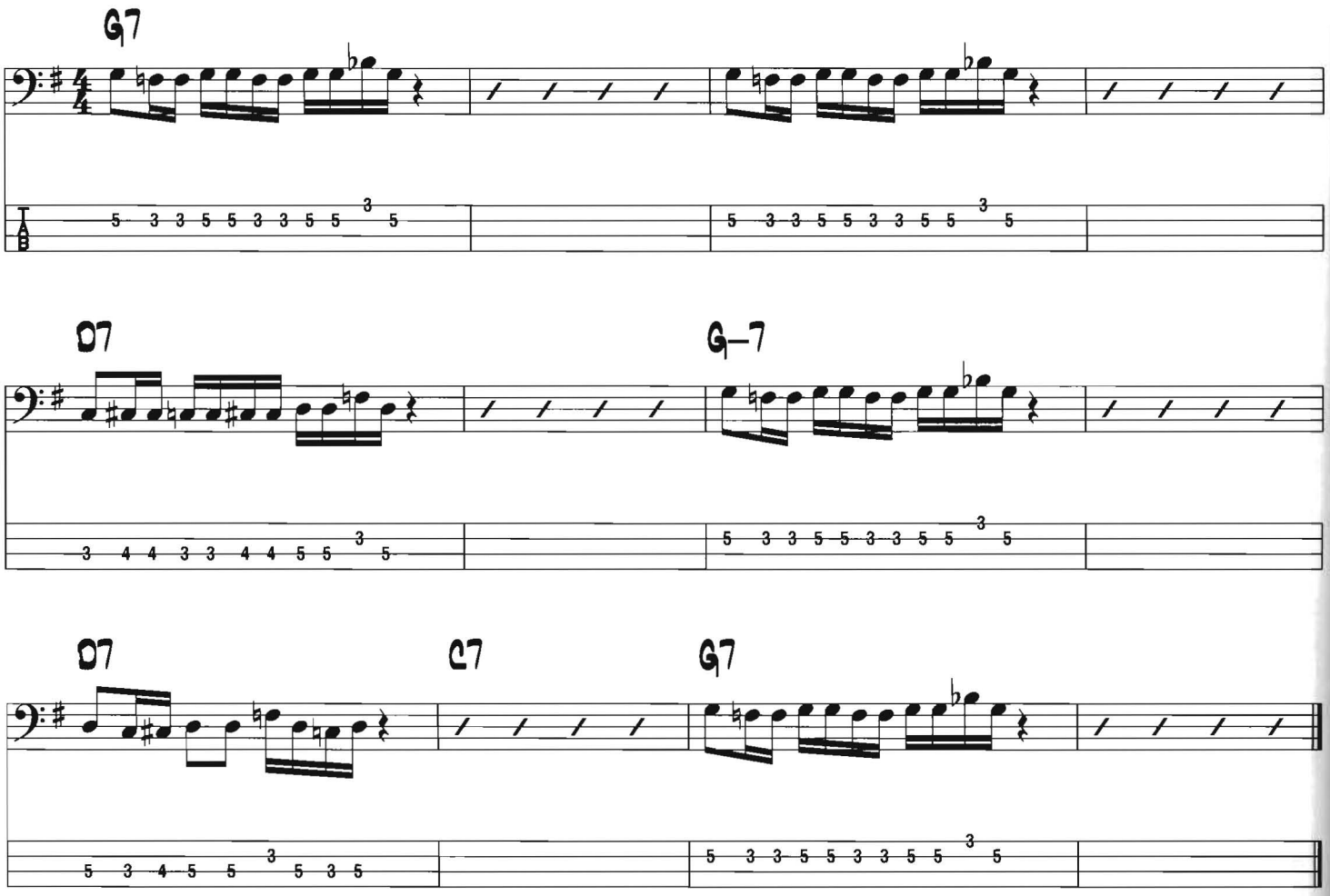
CALL AND RESPONSE

1. Echo each phrase, exactly as you hear it.
2. Improvise an answer to each phrase. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the phrase you hear, and use the notes from the G blues scale.

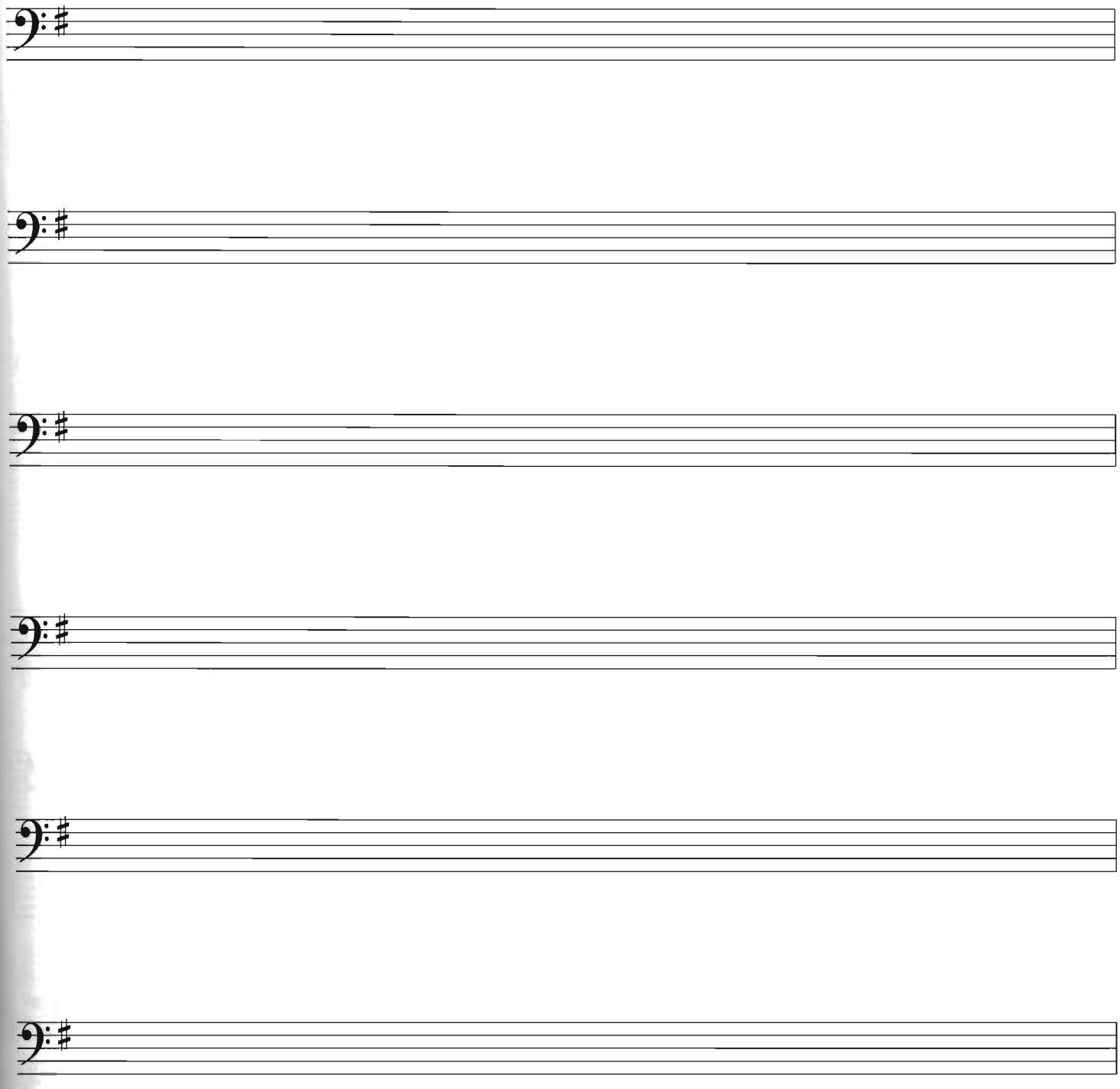
LISTEN 27 PLAY



LISTEN 28 PLAY



Write out a few of your own ideas for funk bass lines, using any of the techniques you have learned.



LISTEN 29 PLAY

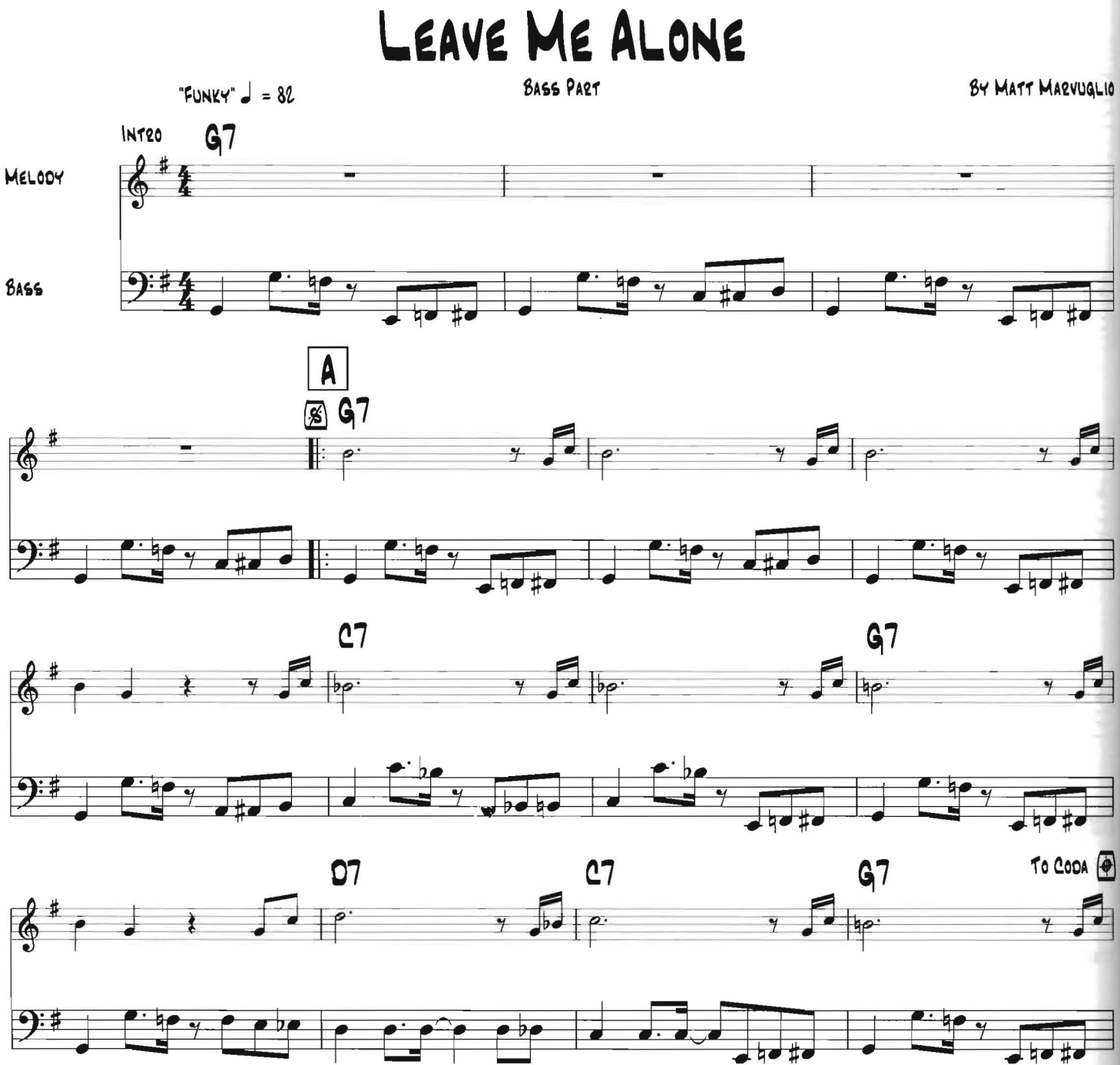
Create a solo using any licks you have played. Memorize your solo, and practice it along with the full band track.

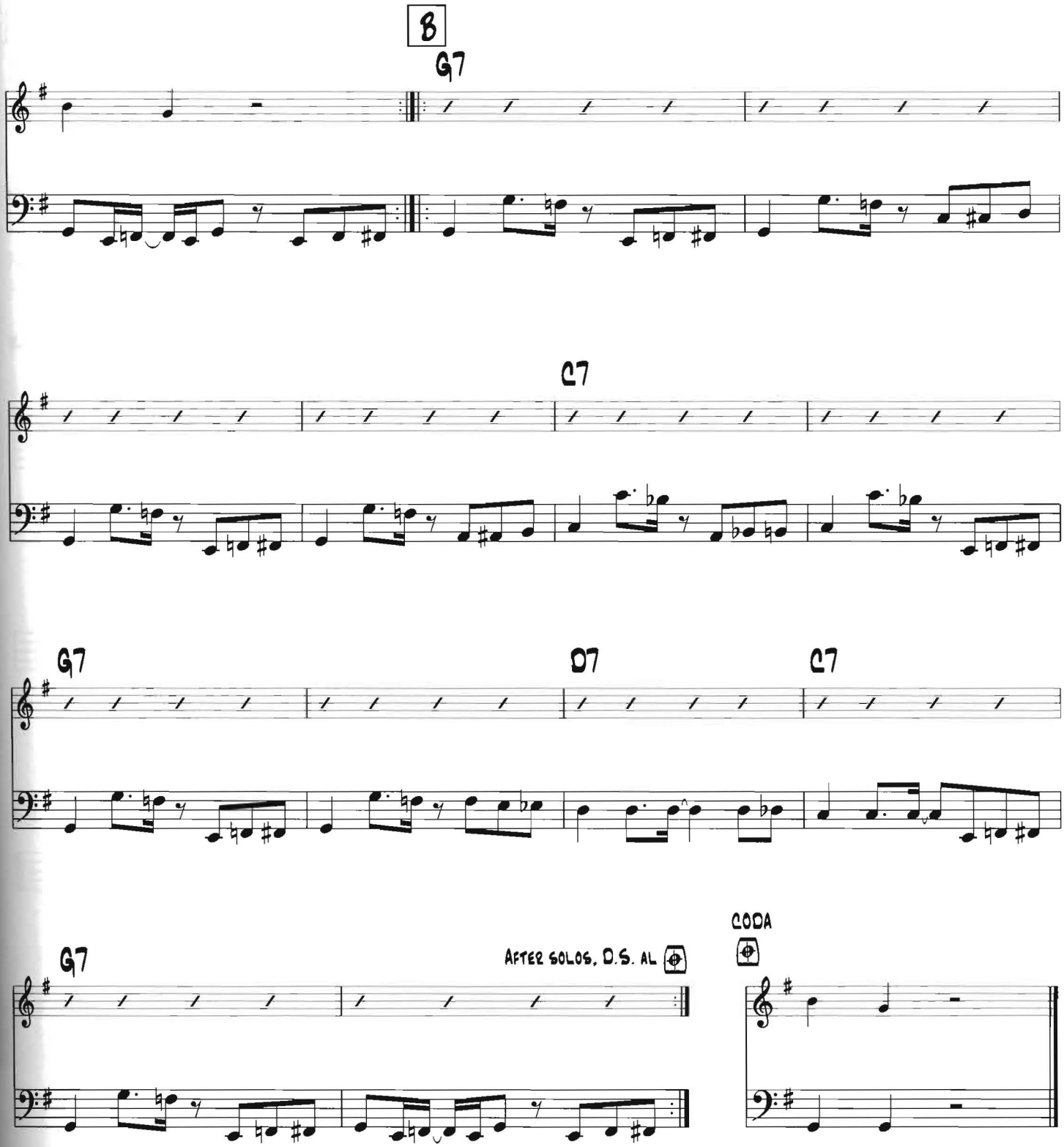
LESSON 16
READING

BASS PART

Play "Leave Me Alone" along with the recording using the written bass part. Note: Open strings for the low E and A make this bass line easier to play.

LISTEN 29 PLAY





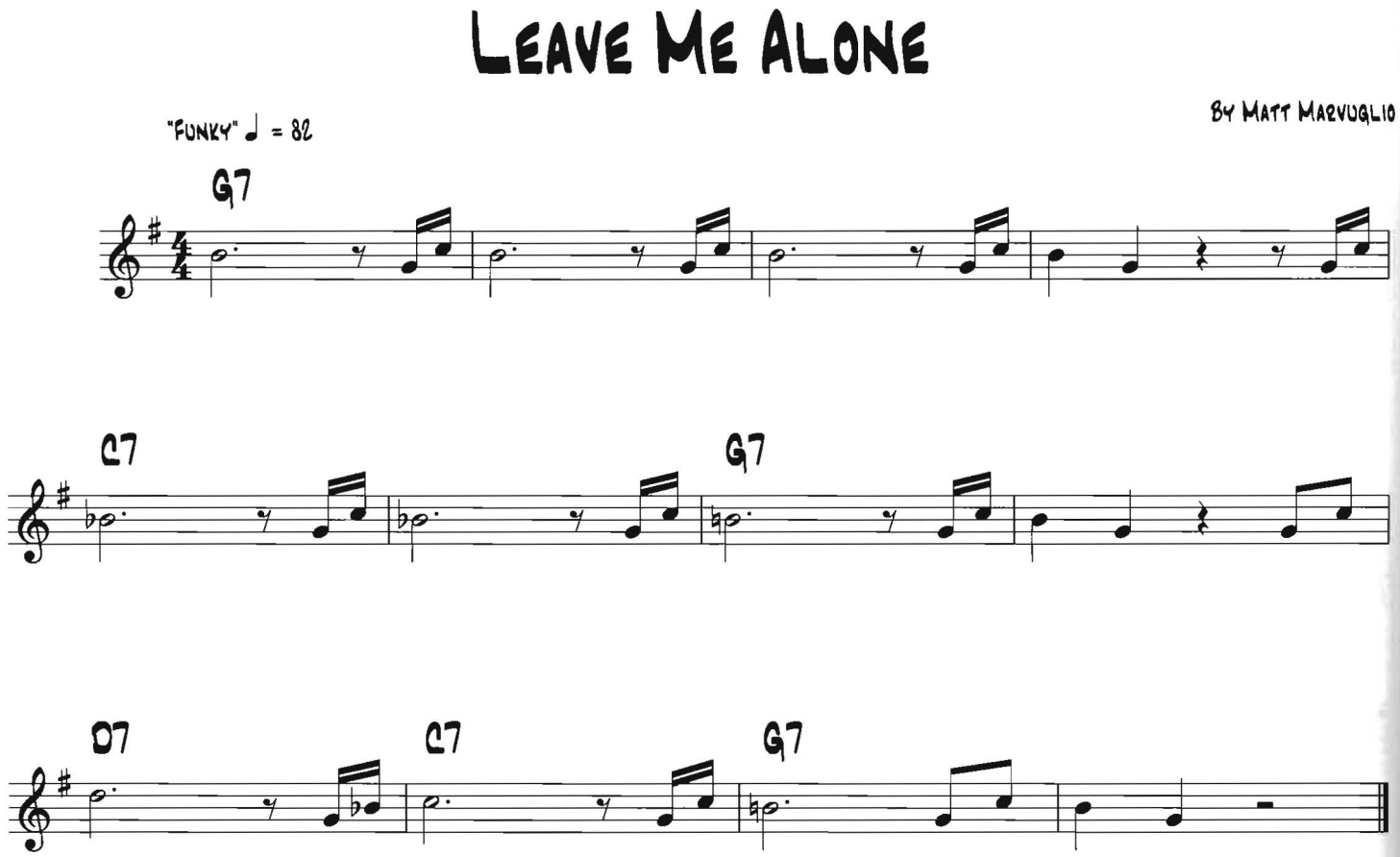
PRACTICE TIP

Memorizing your notes makes it easier to follow arrangement directions, such as "D.S. AL ⊕."

LEAD SHEET

Play "Leave Me Alone" along with the recording, and follow the lead sheet. Play your own bass line.

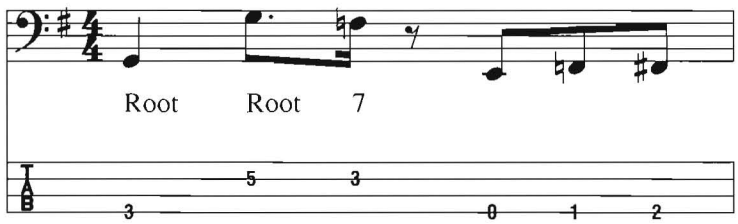
LISTEN 29 PLAY



CHAPTER IV
DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE

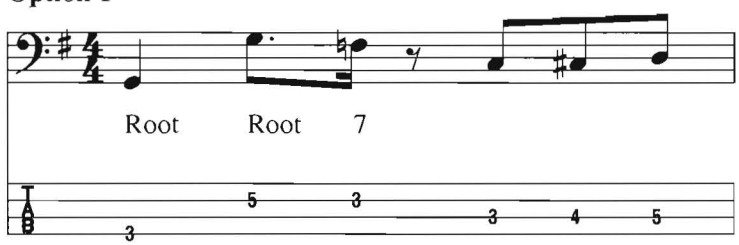
VARYING THE RIFF

Funk riffs often have the root on the first beat, and often use the dominant seventh:

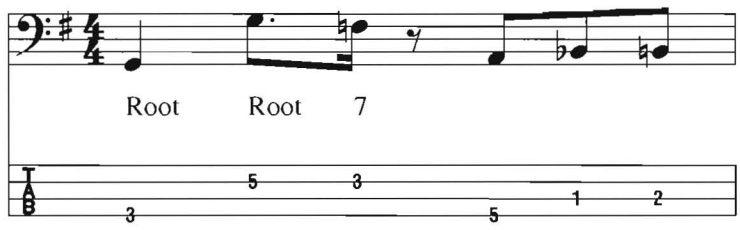


In this tune, the root and the dominant seventh begin every lick. The last three notes change each time:

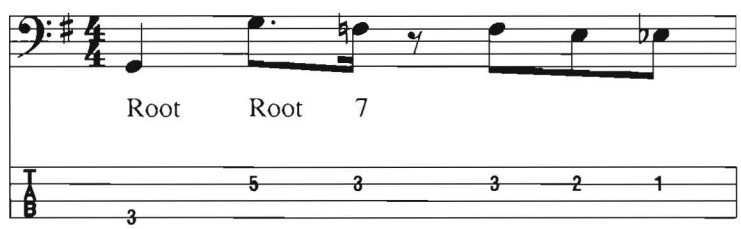
Option 1



Option 2



Option 3



In the basic line and in option 1, the last three notes set up the root. In the other two licks, they lead to a new chord. Small changes to a given lick can make a solid, interesting bass line.

CHALLENGE

LISTEN 20 PLAY

Create your own riff to "Leave Me Alone." Come up with a basic lick using the root and seventh, and then change it slightly in every measure. Accent beats 2 and 4, use some syncopation, and hook up with the sixteenth-note feel. Play your line along with the recording.

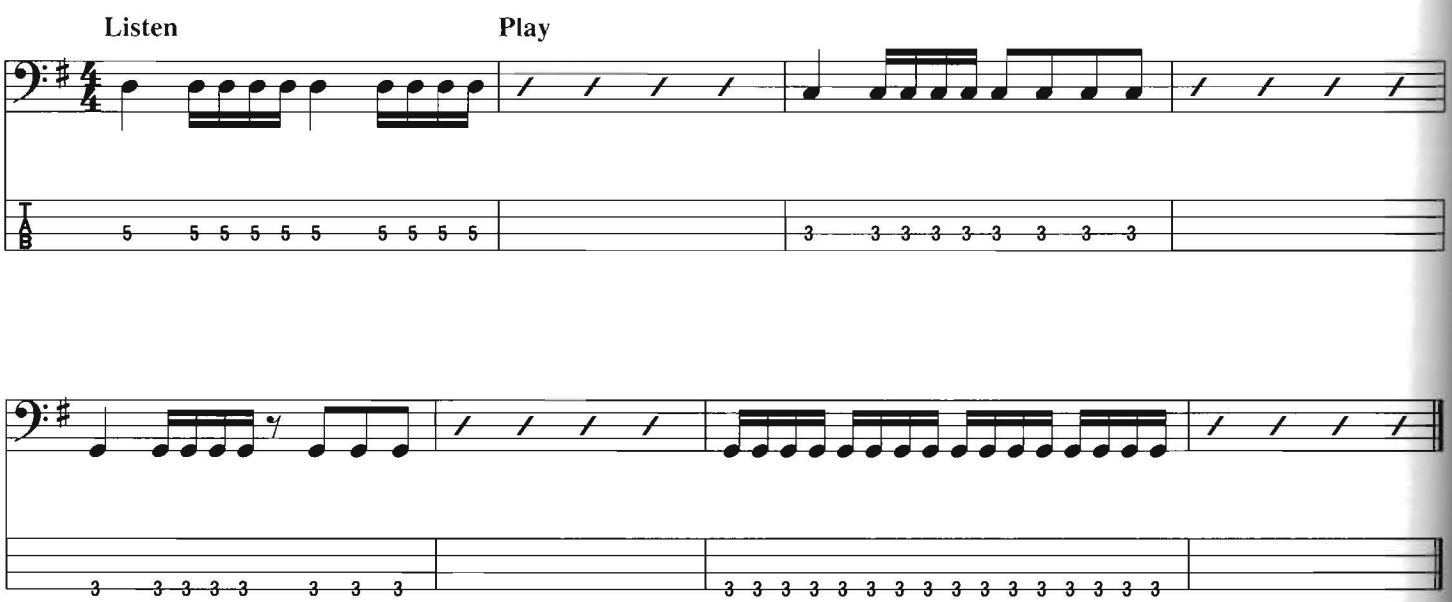
PERFORMANCE TIP

Keep your line simple. Funk bass lines should have a lot of empty space. Don't use too many notes. The root and the octave will keep your line grounded. Just a couple sixteenths in the bass line is enough to create a funk feel. Remember, the drummer will be playing sixteenth notes on every beat, so the bass doesn't need to do it all the time.

RHYTHM PRACTICE

Listen to each rhythmic phrase and then repeat it. Make every note even—the same volume, exactly in time. This exercise will help you develop a clear, clean funk groove. Read as you play. This will train your eyes, as well as your ears.

LISTEN 30 PLAY

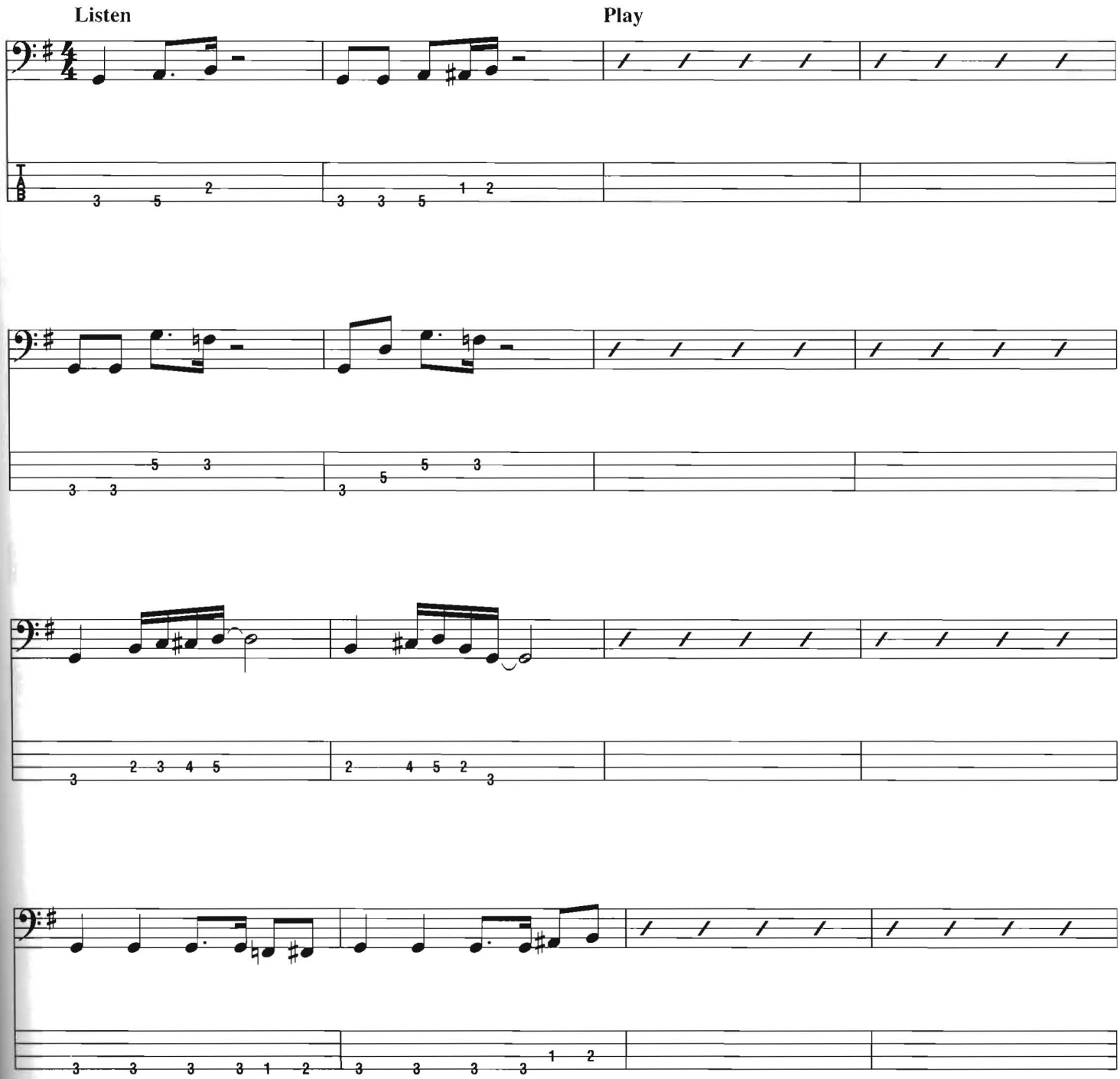


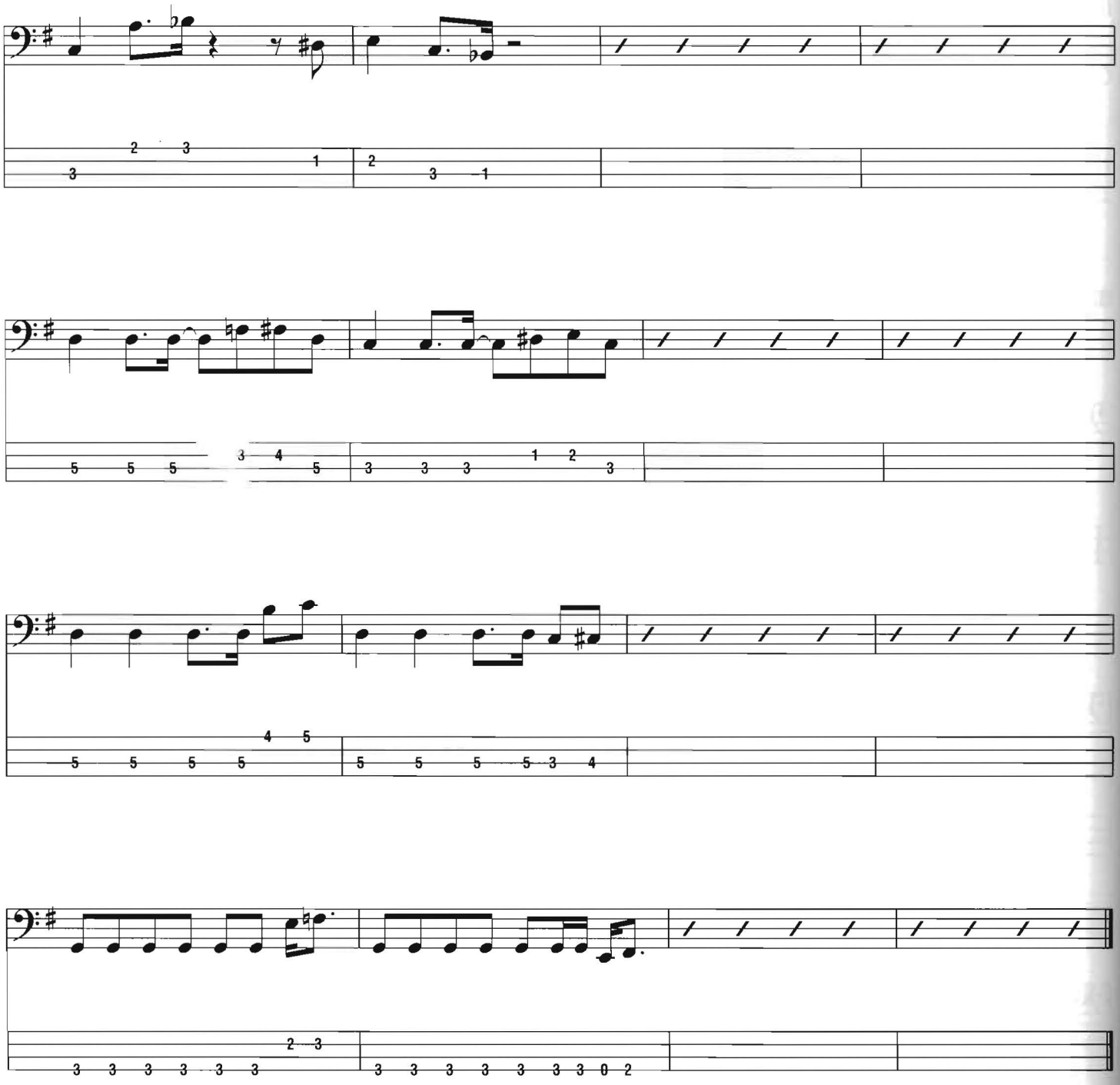
IMPROVISATION

CALL AND RESPONSE: LICKS

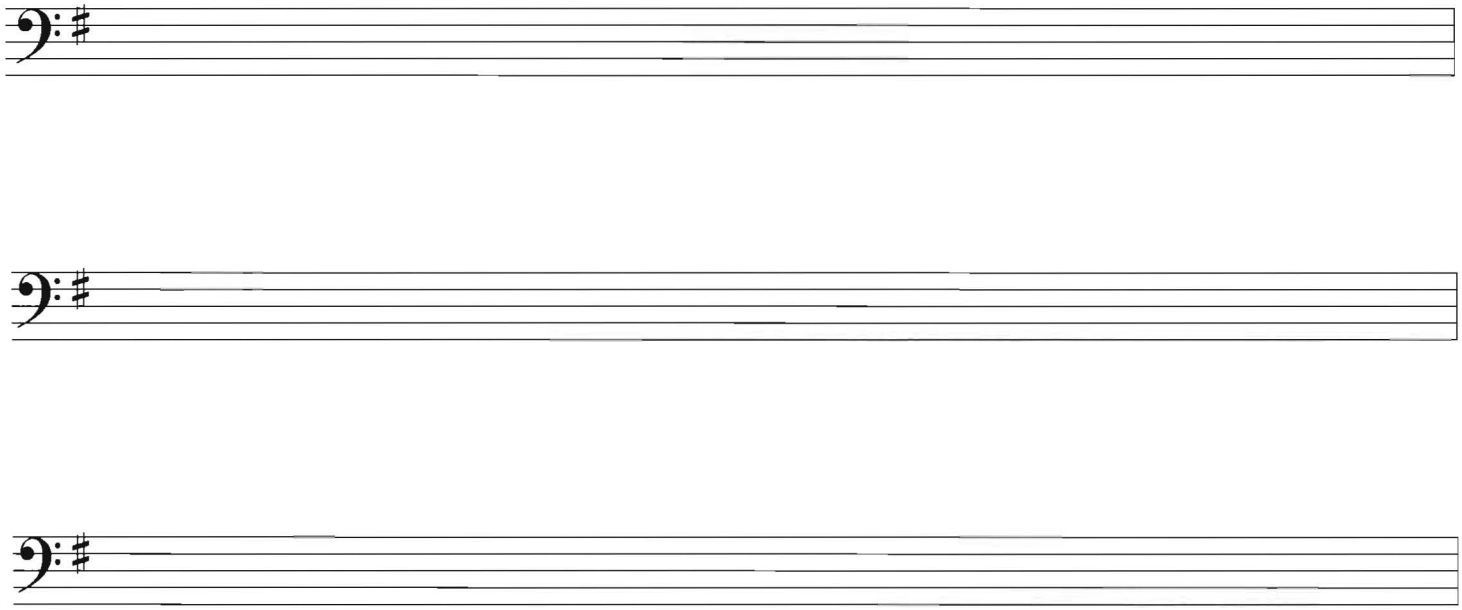
1. Echo each lick, exactly as you hear it.
2. Improvise an answer to each phrase. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the phrase you hear, and use the notes from the G blues scale.

LISTEN 31 PLAY





Write out a few of your own ideas for funk bass lines, using any of the techniques you have learned.



LISTEN 29 PLAY

Create a solo using any licks you have played. Memorize your solo, and practice it along with the recording.

MEMORIZE

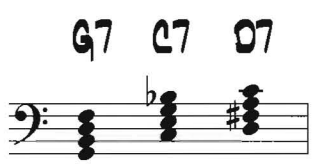
Create a new bass line and solo to "Leave Me Alone." Practice it with the recording, and memorize it.

SUMMARY

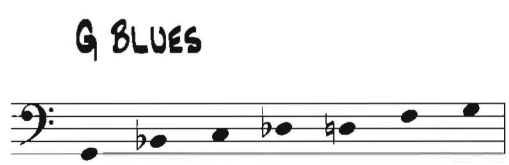
FORM
12-BAR BLUES
(1 CHORUS = 12 BARS)

ARRANGEMENT
INTRO: 4 M.
2 CHORUS MELODY
2 CHORUS SOLO
1 CHORUS MELODY
(CODA)

HARMONY



SCALE



PLAY "LEAVE ME ALONE" WITH YOUR OWN BAND!

PLAYING LIGHT FUNK

CHAPTER V

"Affordable" is another funk tune, but it is lighter, with more of a feeling of open space. This style is popular with smooth-jazz artists. To hear more light funk, listen to artists such as David Sanborn, Earl Klugh, Walter Beasley, the Rippingtons, Dave Grusin, Kenny G, Bob James, and Anita Baker.

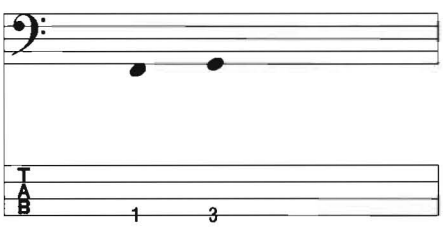
"AFFORDABLE"

LESSON 17
TECHNIQUE/THEORY

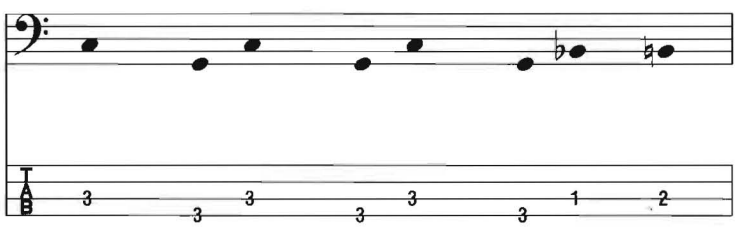
LISTEN 32 PLAY

Listen to "Affordable" and then play along with the recording. Try to match the bass. This tune has two parts.

In the first part, the bass plays these notes:

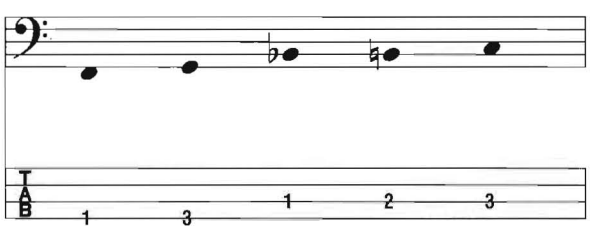


In the second part, the bass plays these notes:

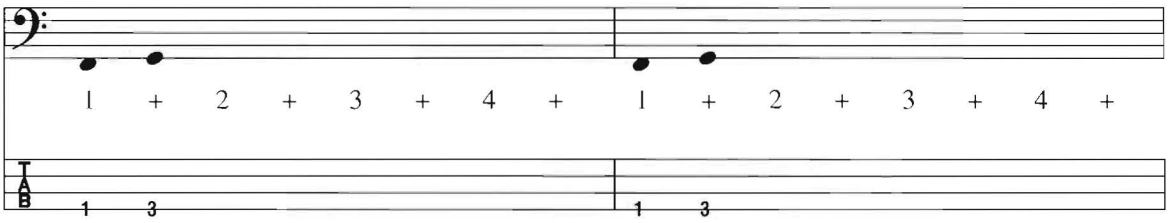


HAND POSITION

The written bass part to this tune only uses five notes. They fit easily in first position:

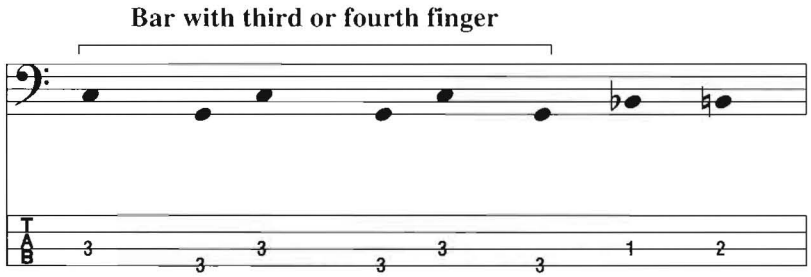


The first part only has two notes on the first beat. Count carefully. There is so much space here that it is easy to lose your place.

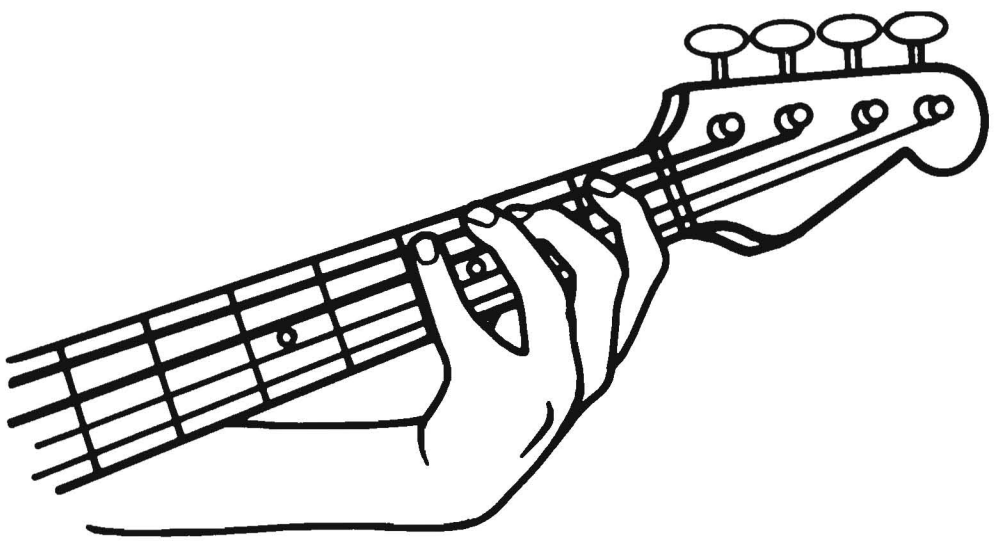


BARRING

The second lick alternates between two notes, on two different strings.



Hold down the third and fourth strings with your third finger (or your fourth finger, if it is more comfortable). This is called *barring*—holding down several strings with one finger.



When you bar two or more strings, you can play several notes without moving your left hand at all. This makes some licks much easier to play.

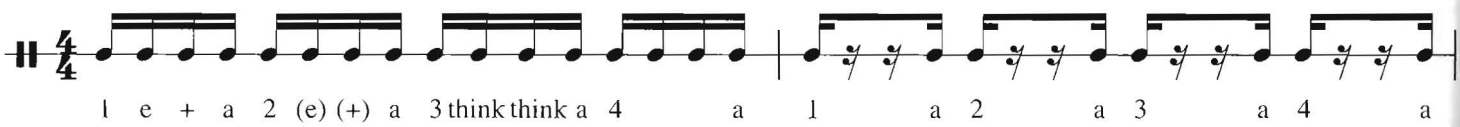
LESSON 18
LEARNING THE GROOVE

HOOKING UP TO LIGHT FUNK

LISTEN 32 PLAY

Listen to "Affordable." This groove is built around eighth notes, with some syncopated sixteenths in the B section. Notice that the band hooks up with the bass drum.

To learn this feel, practice counting sixteenths, leaving out the middle two sixteenths of each beat. Count out loud, along with a metronome or click track on the quarter-note pulse.

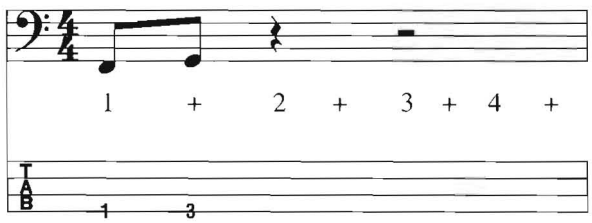


This tune is *light* funk. The bass holds back more than it would with a *heavy* funk tune, such as "Leave Me Alone." To make it lighter, the bass part is quieter, and has fewer notes. What were some of the other elements of funk you learned in the last chapter?

"Affordable" has two different parts with two rhythmic feels. The first part has a lot of empty space. All instruments play very sparsely.

Play along with the first part to "Affordable." Which other instruments are playing these eighth notes? Count out the eighth-note feel, "1+ 2 + 3 + 4 +," as you play.

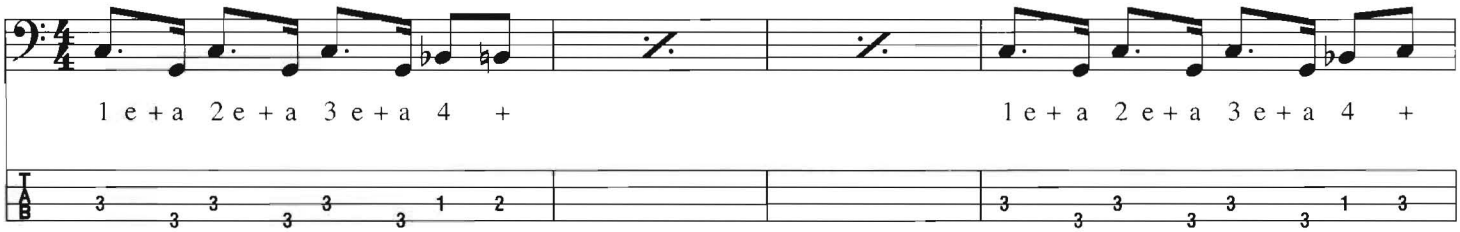
LISTEN 33 PLAY



Play along with the second part to "Affordable." Notice that this part is much more active, with a more steady drum beat. Rather than just playing every beat, it hits every eighth note. This makes the groove seem twice as fast, and it is called going into a *double-time* feel.

The second part has a stronger funk feel—accents on beats 2 and 4, and more rhythmic activity. How else do the other instruments' parts change? As you play this exercise, count the sixteenth-note subdivisions, "1e+a 2e+a 3e+a 4+." Notice the last beat has two even eighth notes.

LISTEN 34 PLAY



LISTEN 35 PLAY

Play the whole tune again. Transition smoothly from one part to the next. You must switch from an even, eighth-note feel to a rhythmically active sixteenth-note feel. Accenting the first note of every beat throughout both parts of the tune will make the transition more smooth.

PRACTICE TIP

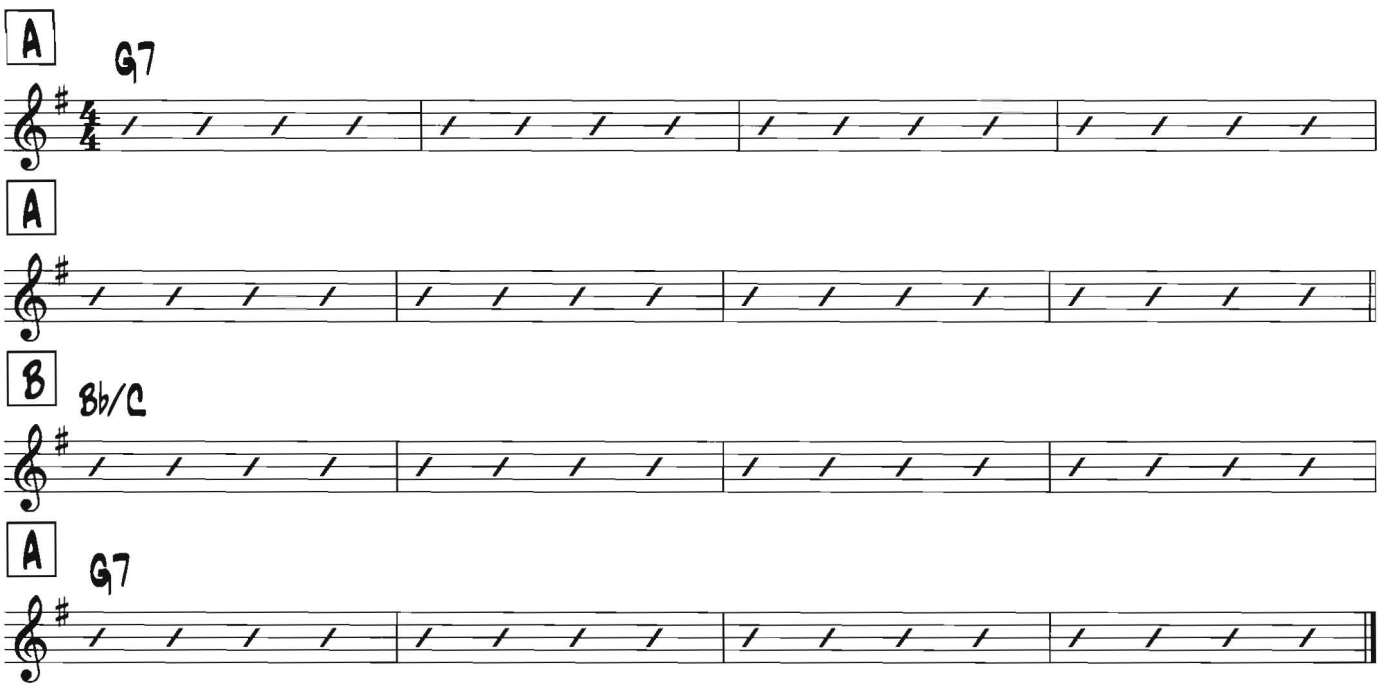
Imagine the tip of the drummer's stick hitting the cymbal—that's when you should play.

LESSON 19
IMPROVISATION

FORM AND ARRANGEMENT

Listen to "Affordable" and follow the saxophone melody over the 16-bar form.

LISTEN 32 PLAY



As you have already seen from practicing the bass line, there are two primary musical ideas in this tune. The sax plays contrasting melodies over them. Idea A is very sparse. It lasts for eight measures, with two phrases of sax melody. Idea B is in double time. It lasts for four measures. Then Idea A returns for four measures. This form can be described simply as "AABA."

PRACTICE TIP

Imagine the melody as you play your bass line. This will help you keep your place—particularly during improvised solos, when nobody plays the melody. Although the form of this tune is simple, it is easy to get lost. The four-measure return of Idea A at the end of the form may be confused with the eight measures of Idea A that begin the new chorus. Altogether, there are twelve measures of this idea, so keep careful count.

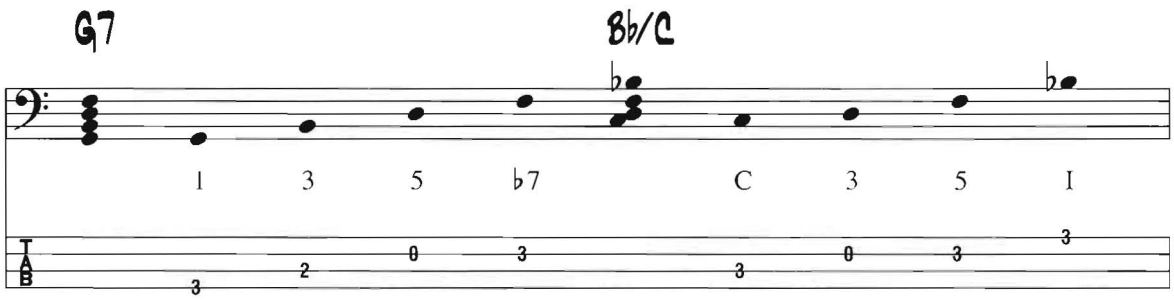
LISTEN 32 PLAY

Listen to the whole tune. Sing the melody during the solo, and keep your place in the form. What is the arrangement on the recording? Is there an introduction or ending?

IDEAS FOR IMPROVISING BASS LINES

CHORDS

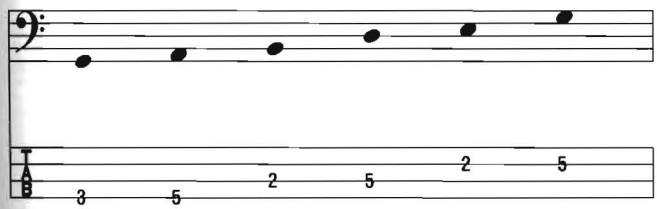
"Affordable" has two chords: G7 and B♭/C. Play them in first position:



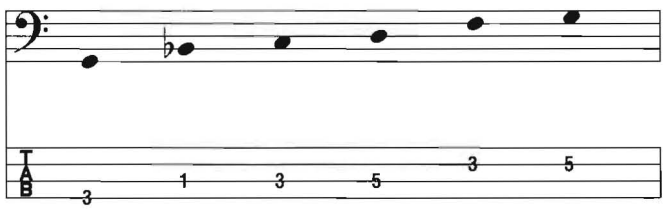
When you see a chord symbol with two chords separated by a slash, the first one shows the chord, and the second one shows the bass note. In this case, there is a B♭ chord played over the note C as the bass note. Make sure that the second note (C) is a prominent part of your line. At the very least, play it on the *downbeat*, the first beat of a measure.

SCALE

In this tune, use notes of the G major pentatonic scale to improvise during the A section.



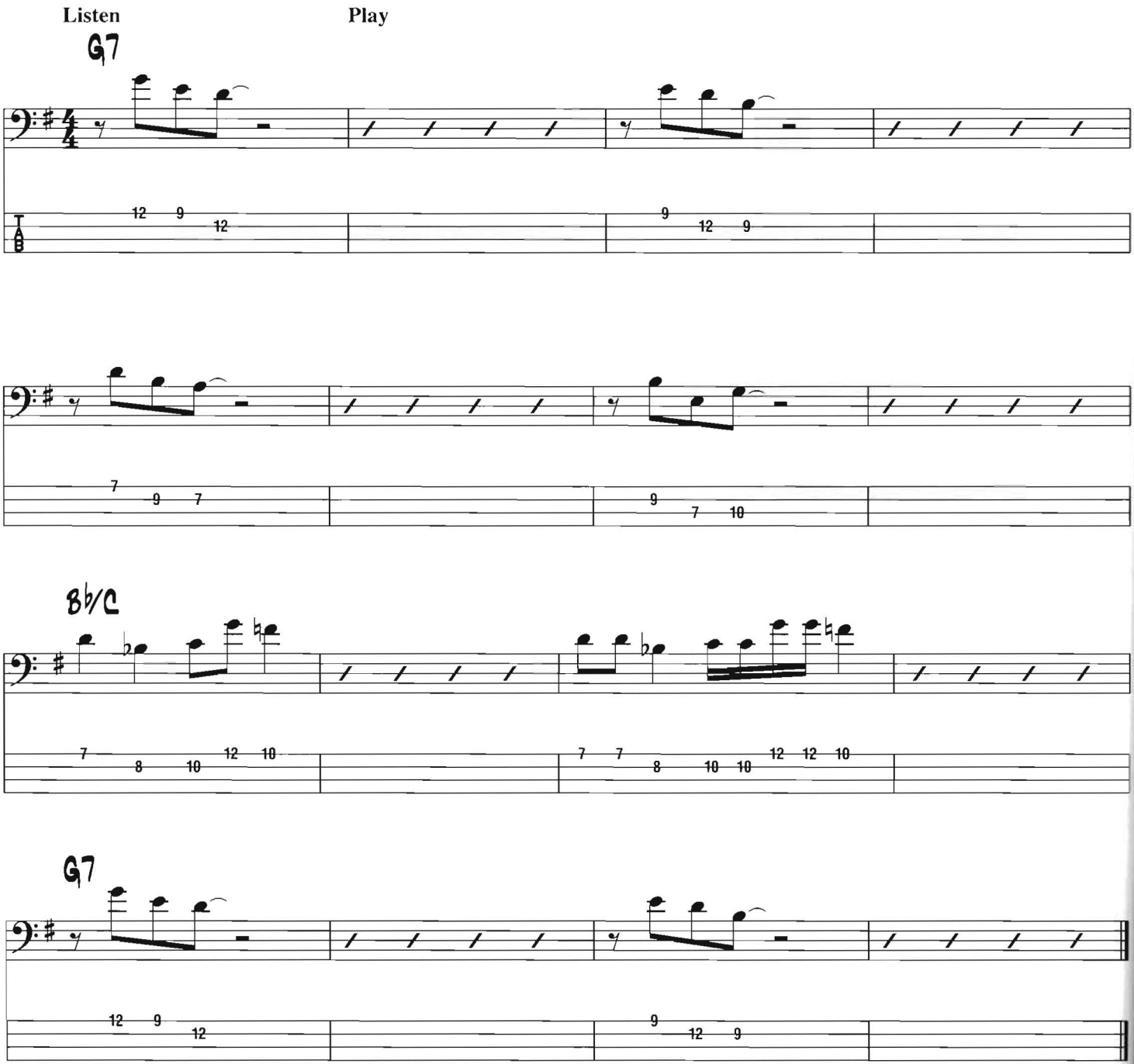
Use the notes of the G minor pentatonic scale to improvise during the B section.



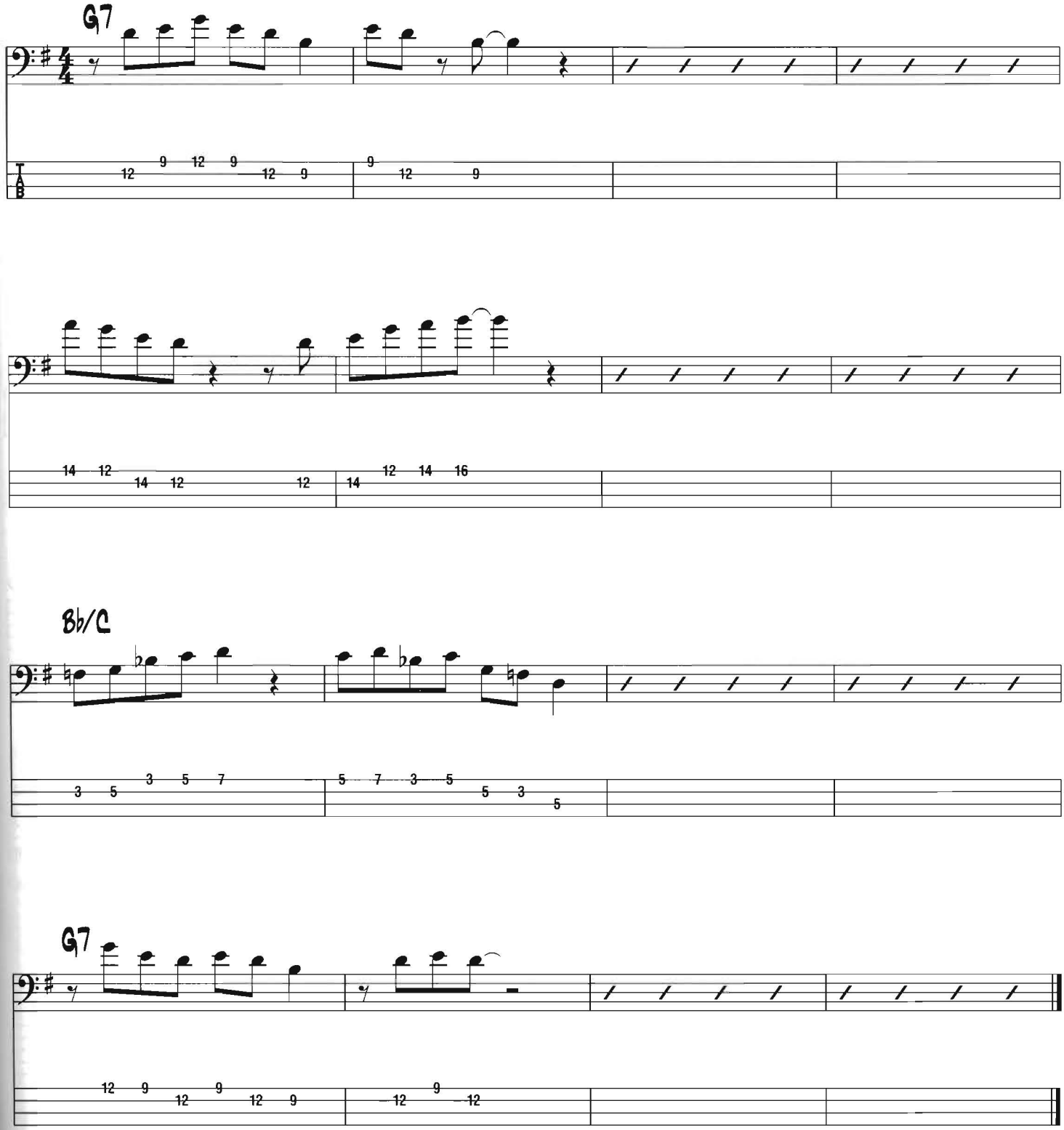
CALL AND RESPONSE

1. Echo each phrase, exactly as you hear it.
2. Improvise an answer to each phrase. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the phrase you hear, and use the notes from the G pentatonic scales.

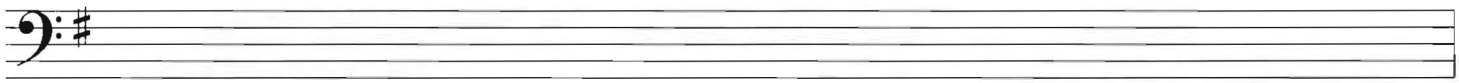
LISTEN 36 PLAY

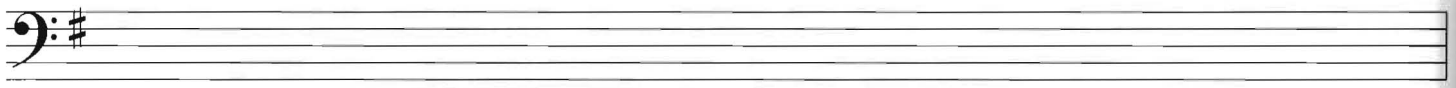


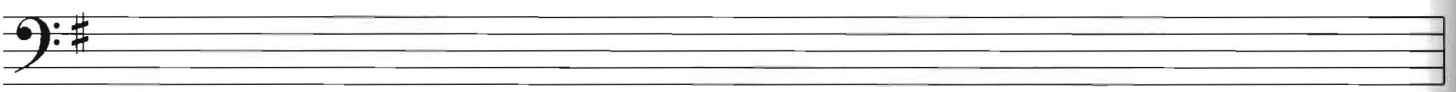
LISTEN 37 PLAY

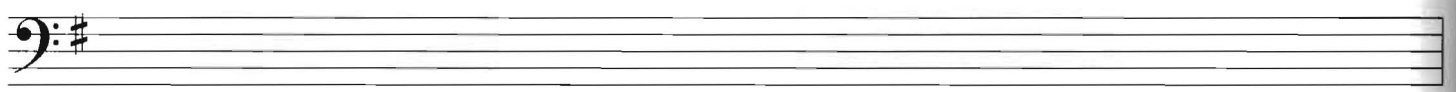


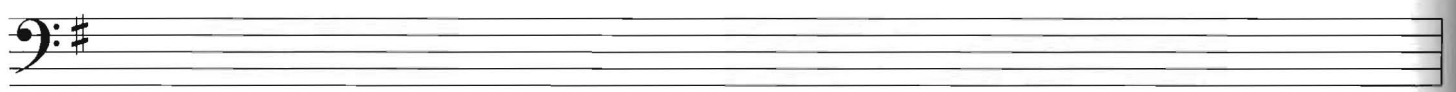
Write out a few of your own ideas for funk bass lines, using any of the techniques you have learned.











LISTEN 35 PLAY

Create your own bass line to "Affordable" and play it along with the recording. Create two different ideas. Keep the original bass line's groove and its feeling of space. You might even base it directly on the original, using the same rhythms with different notes, or the same notes with a different rhythm.

LISTEN 35 PLAY

Create a solo using any licks you have played. Memorize your solo, and practice it along with the recording.

PERFORMANCE TIP

A good bass line doesn't need to have many notes. What matters is which notes you choose, and where you place them in the beat. The root should be played on the first beat most of the time. Then go from there. In this tune, however, the seventh is played on the first beat, followed by the root. This exception to the rule gives the bass line a darker sound.

CHALLENGE

LISTEN 35 PLAY

Play along with the recording, improvising a new bass part on the spot, while you are playing. Use chord tones, passing tones, and the G pentatonic scales. At every chord change, play the chord root on the downbeat. Keep your line simple, and make sure it fits with what everyone else is playing on the recording. Concentrate on knowing where you are in the form at all times. Hearing the chords played by the other instruments will help you keep your place.

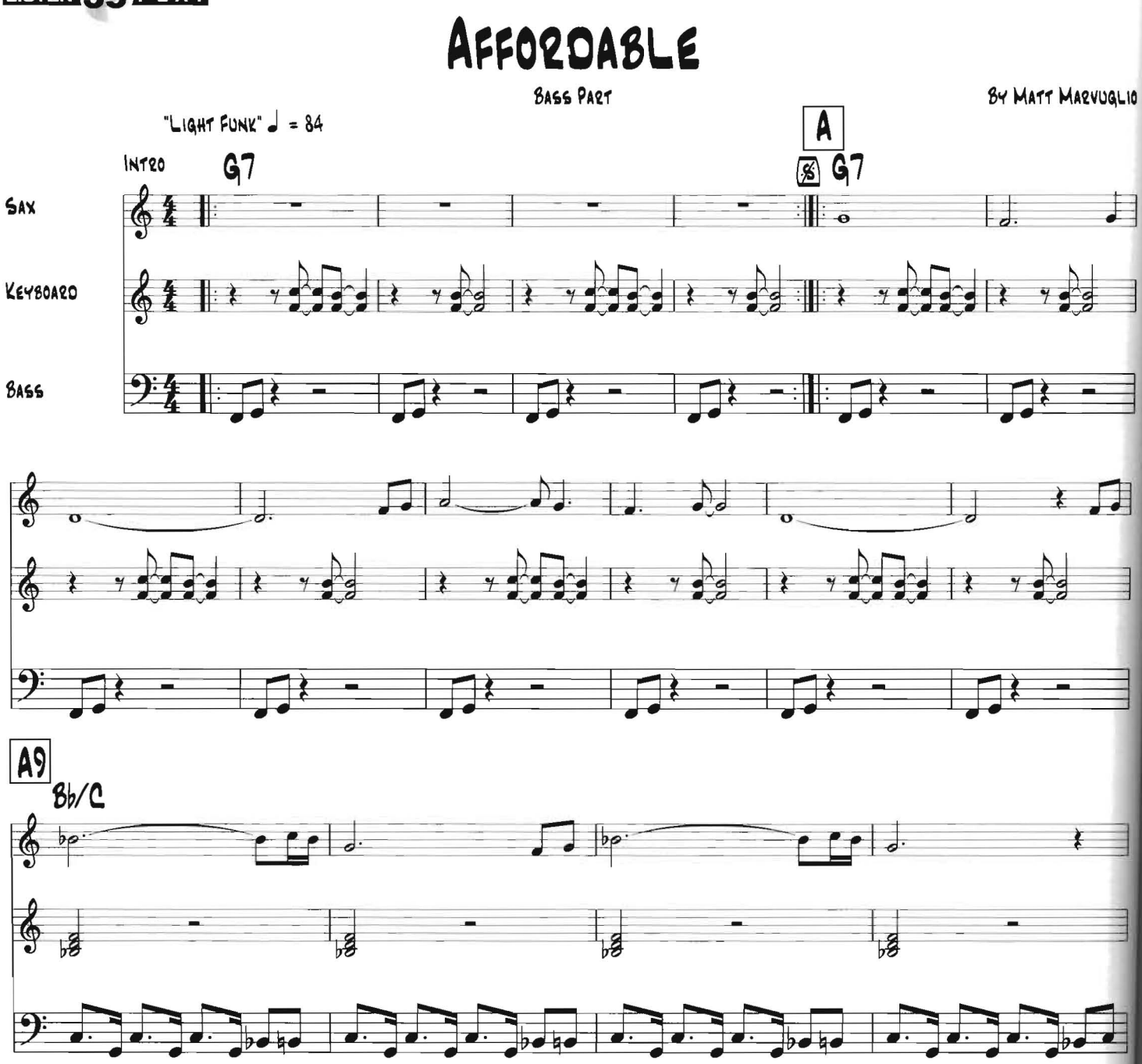
LESSON 20
READING

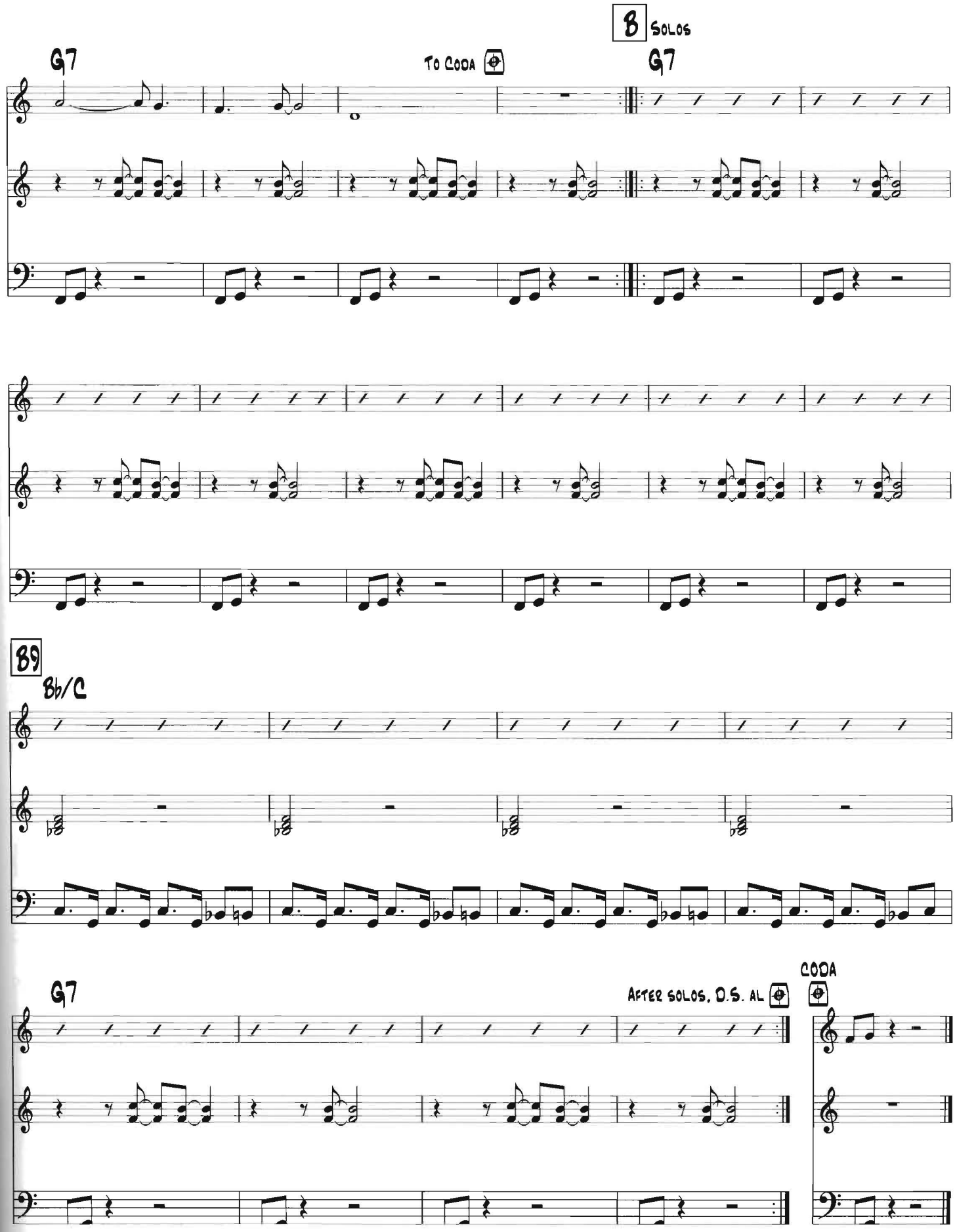
BASS PART

Play "Affordable" along with the recording. Use the written the bass part.

KEYBOARD Sometimes, your part will show another instrument, such as the keyboard or guitar. This is especially common in tunes like "Affordable," where the music is very sparse. Following these other parts will help you keep your place.

LISTEN 35 PLAY

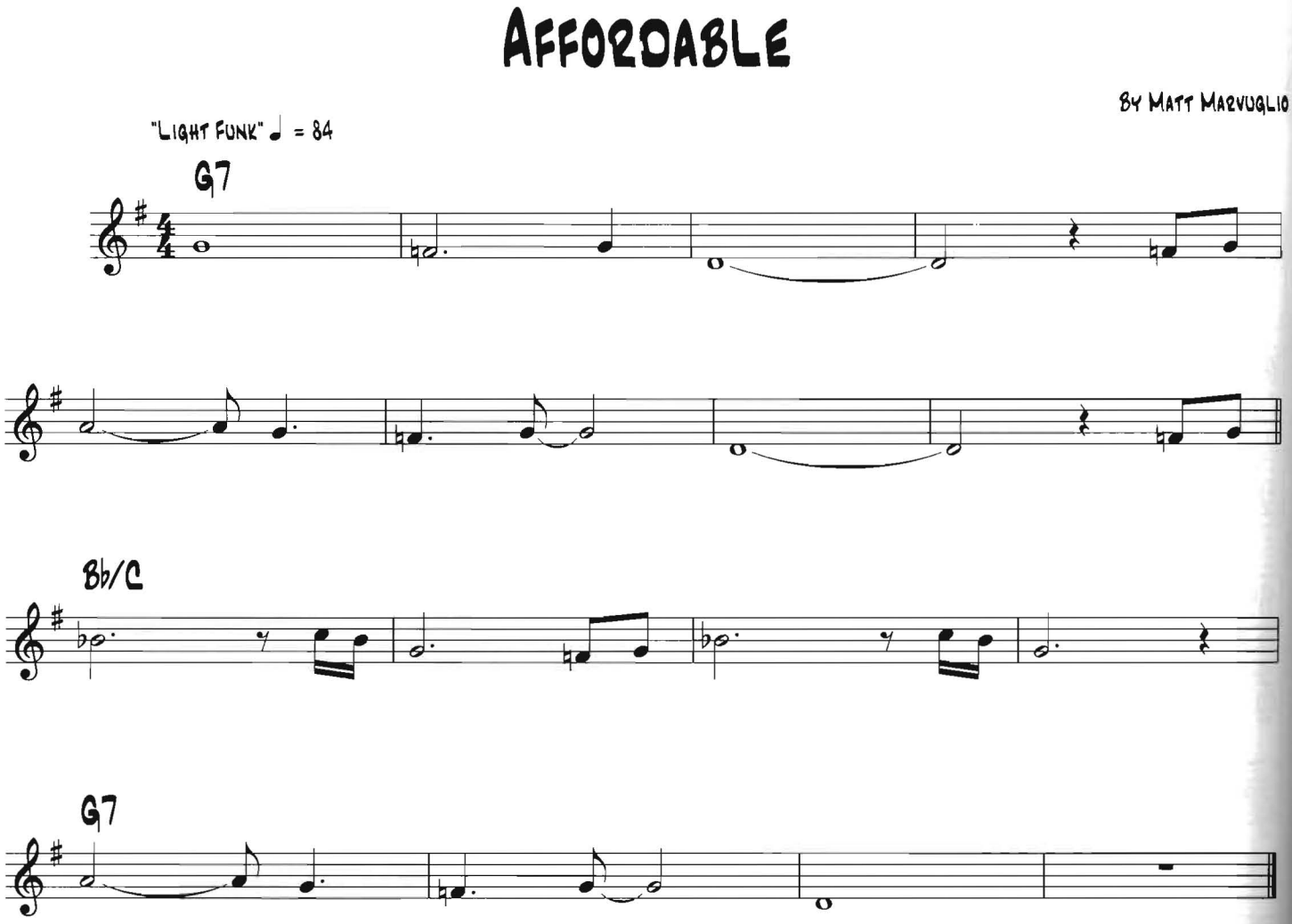



B Solos
G7
To Coda
G7
B9
Bb/C
G7
After solos, D.S. al
Coda

LEAD SHEET

Play "Affordable" along with the recording, and follow the lead sheet. Play your own bass line.

LISTEN 35 PLAY



CHAPTER V
DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE

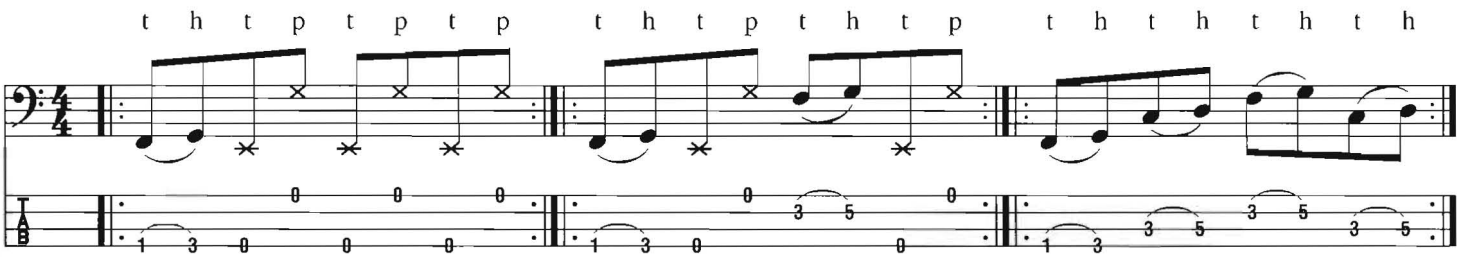
SLAP STYLE

Slap bass is a percussive style of playing. Some notes are sounded normally, but others have special effects instead, such as pops, thumps, and slaps.

t	Thumb slap	Thumb strikes the string against the fingerboard.
h	Hammer on	Fingering hand plays note by striking string against the fingerboard.
p	Pop	Plucking hand pulls string and allows it to "slap" against the fingerboard.
x	Dead note	String muted with fingering hand so that the pitch does not sound.

Listen to these three slap-style riffs, and then practice them. Strive for an even, consistent sound, whether you are playing sounded or dead notes.

LISTEN 38 PLAY



LISTEN 33 PLAY

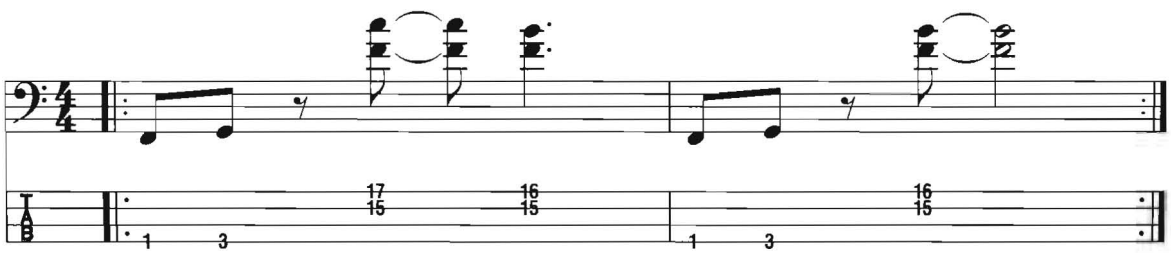
Practice these three riffs along with the first part to "Affordable."

CHALLENGE: DOUBLE STOPS

Here is a really hip variation that uses *double stops* (two notes played at the same time) and your upper register.

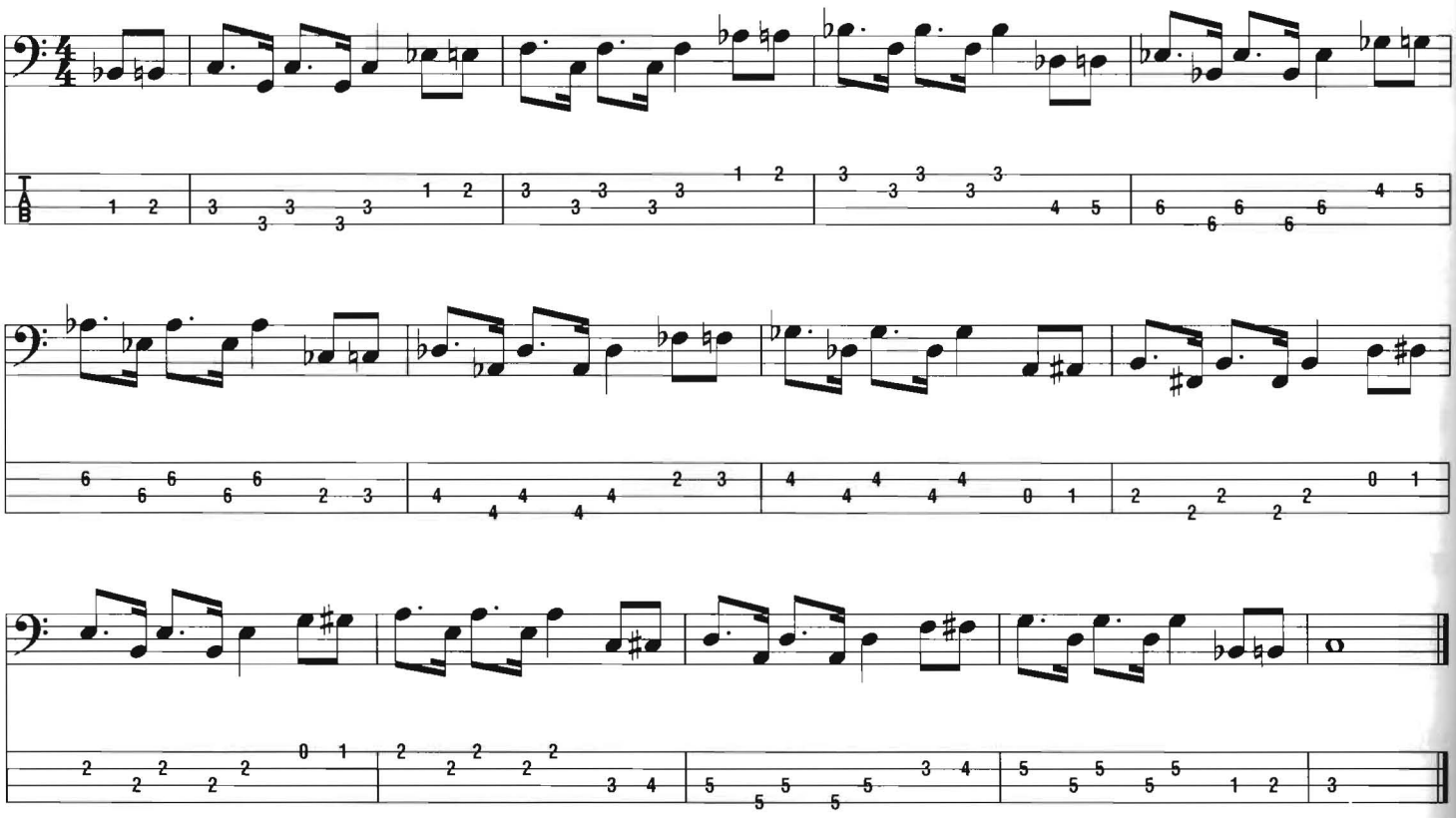
Practice this riff and then play it along with the first part to "Affordable."

LISTEN 33 PLAY



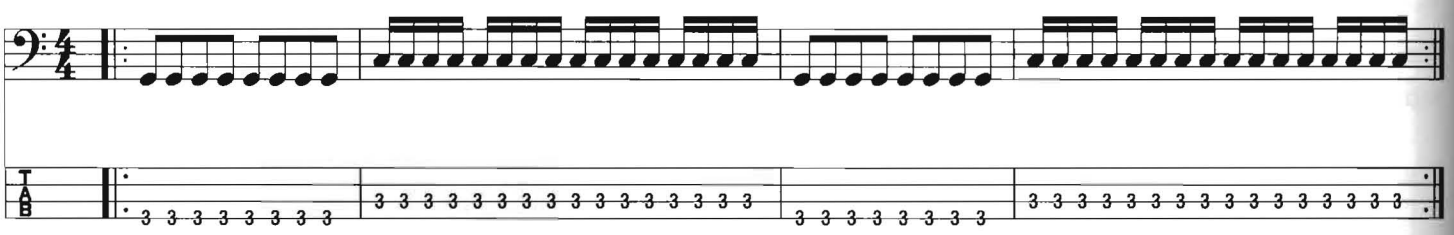
BARRING EXERCISE

Use bar fingering on this exercise.



RHYTHM PRACTICE

When alternating between section A and section B, make sure that you don't speed up the pulse. It goes into double time and feels faster, but the tempo remains the same. This exercise will help you practice switching between regular time and double time.



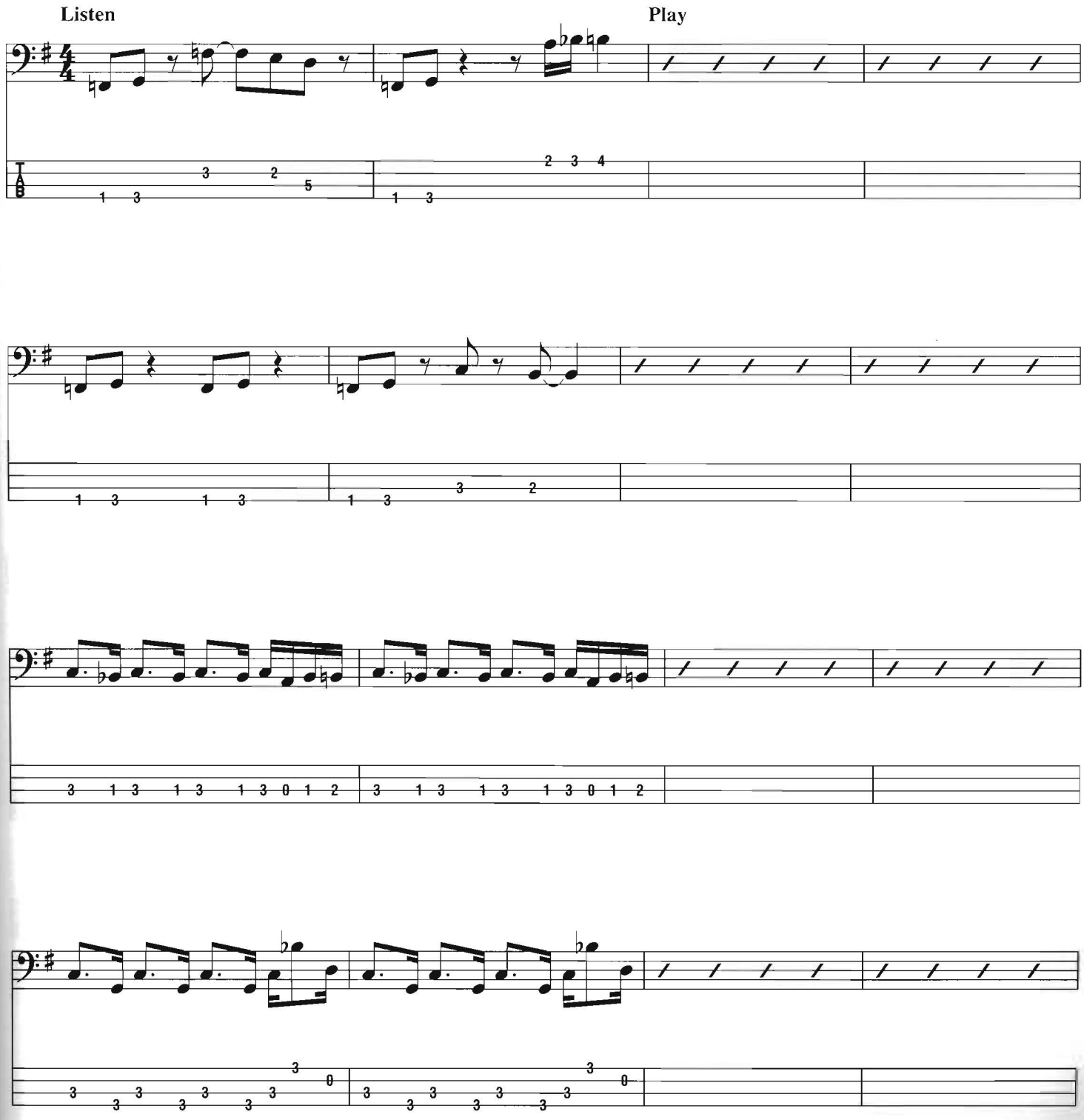
PRACTICE TIP

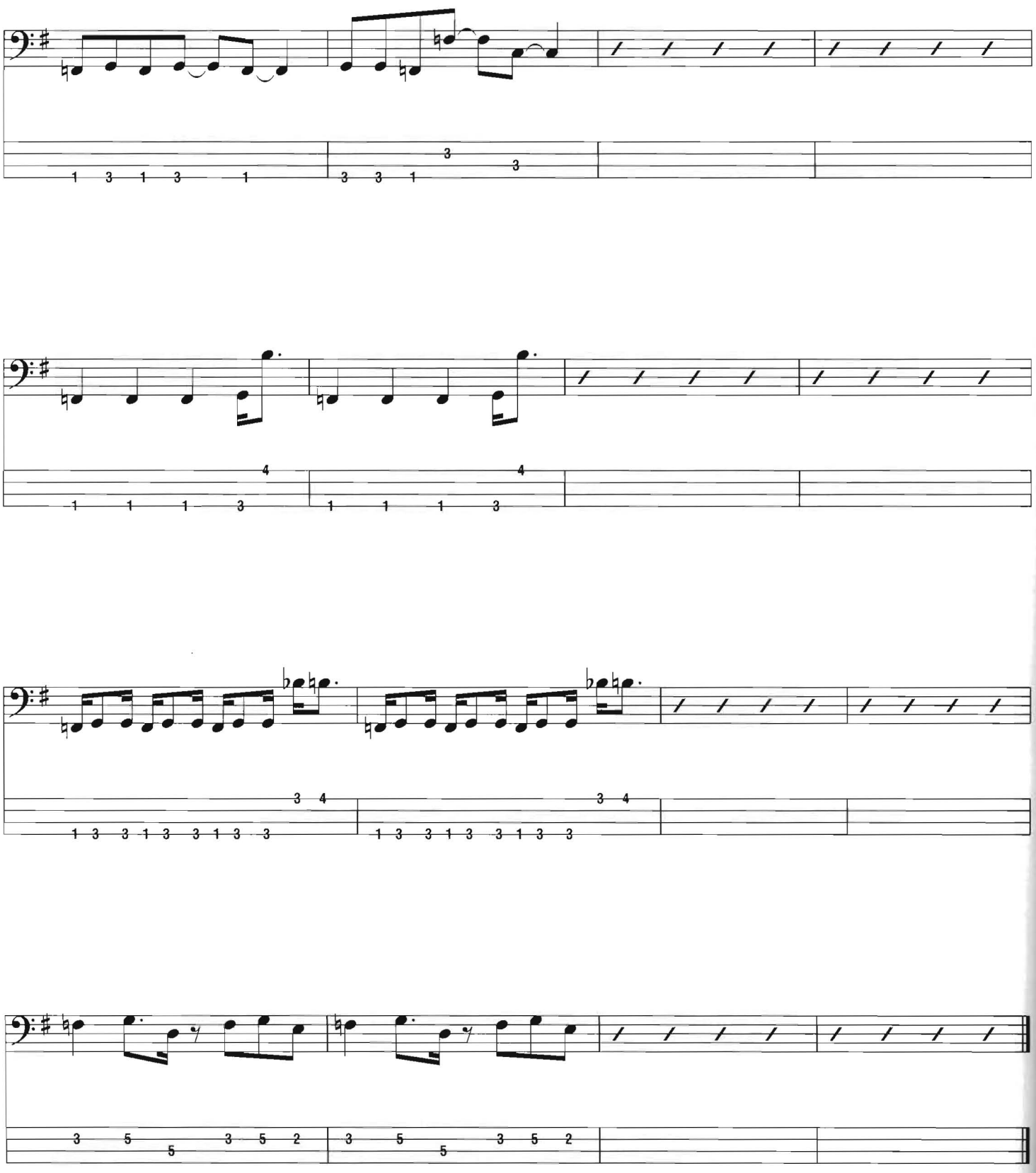
Start slowly. Repeat the line over and over, gradually increasing the tempo each time you play it. Keep the pulse steady. Increase your speed only when you can play the line perfectly at the old tempo.

CALL AND RESPONSE: LICKS

1. Echo each lick, exactly as you hear it.
2. Improvise an answer to each lick. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the lick you hear, and use the notes from the G pentatonic scales.Which notes are chord tones and which are chromatic passing tones?

LISTEN 39 PLAY





PERFORMANCE TIP

Notice how similar some of these phrases are to the phrases played on the recording. Imitation is also a good source of improvisation ideas.

MEMORIZE

LISTEN 35 PLAY

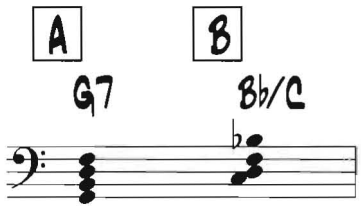
Create a new bass line and solo to "Affordable." Practice it with the recording, and memorize it.

SUMMARY

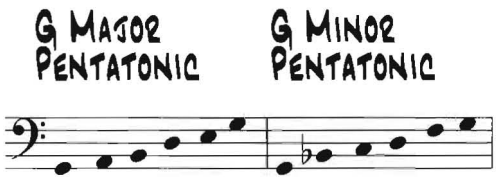
FORM
16-BAR AABA
(1 CHORUS = 16 BARS)
A: 4 M.
B: 4 M.

ARRANGEMENT
INTRO: 8 M.
1 CHORUS MELODY
1 CHORUS SOLO
1 CHORUS MELODY

HARMONY



SCALE



PLAY "AFFORDABLE" WITH YOUR OWN BAND!

PLAYING HARD ROCK

CHAPTER VI

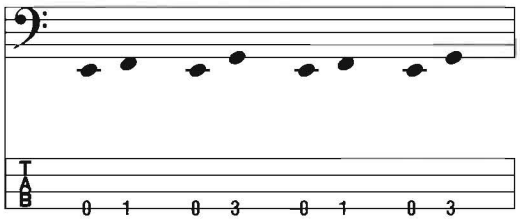
"Don't Look Down" is a *hard rock* tune. Hard rock first appeared in the late 1960s. It has characteristic heavy bass, long, drawn out chords, and amplified instruments. To hear more hard rock, listen to artists such as Aerosmith, Metallica, Powerman 5000, the Allman Brothers Band, Rob Zombie, Godsmack, 311, Stone Temple Pilots, Black Crowes, Steve Vai, and Smashing Pumpkins.

LESSON 21
TECHNIQUE/THEORY

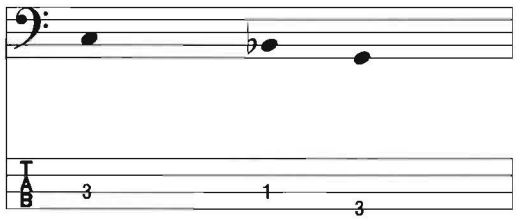
LISTEN 40 PLAY

Listen to "Don't Look Down" and play along with the recording. Try to match the bass. This tune has two parts.

In the first part, the bass plays these notes:

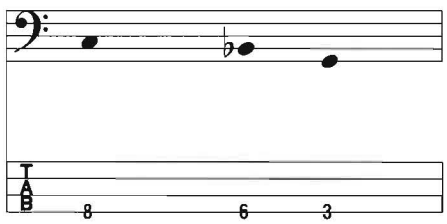


In the second part, the bass plays these notes:



HAND POSITION

You can play both these riffs in first position. Some rock players prefer to play the second lick on the E string. This gives it a heavier sound, but your hand must change positions:



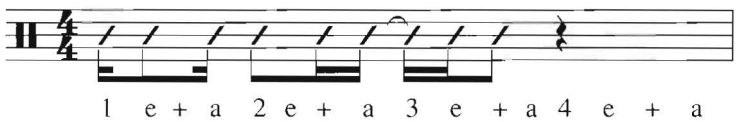
LESSON 22
LEARNING THE GROOVE

HOOKING UP TO HARD ROCK

Listen to "Don't Look Down." This tune has a standard rock/metal groove. It is a heavy feel, with very simple drum and bass parts. These parts must be simple because they are intended to be played in large arenas, where echoes would make busier parts sound muddy. It's a case of "less is more."

LISTEN 41 PLAY

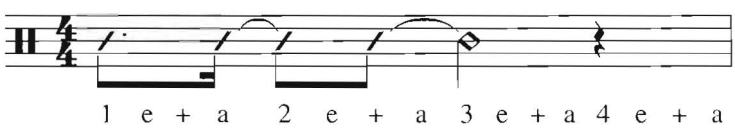
Listen to the first part to "Don't Look Down." The groove has a sixteenth-note feel. Eighth notes are played straight. The bass is joined by the guitar, making the riff as prominent as the melody. This active riff has a strong sixteenth-note feel. Notice the syncopations. Tap your foot on each beat, and count out the sixteenth notes as you listen:



The bass drum plays on beats 1 and 3, which is typical of rock drum beats. The two syncopations in the bass line—on the "e" of 1, and on the "a" of 2—make the first and third beats even stronger. The first syncopation comes later than expected, as if it were bouncing off the first beat. The second one comes before the third beat, as if it were leading to it.

Listen to the second part to "Don't Look Down." Count the sixteenths of the second riff. Does the syncopated note come earlier or later than the beat?

LISTEN 42 PLAY



When you are comfortable counting these rhythms, play the line on your bass along with the recording. Play exactly the same part as you hear in the guitar.

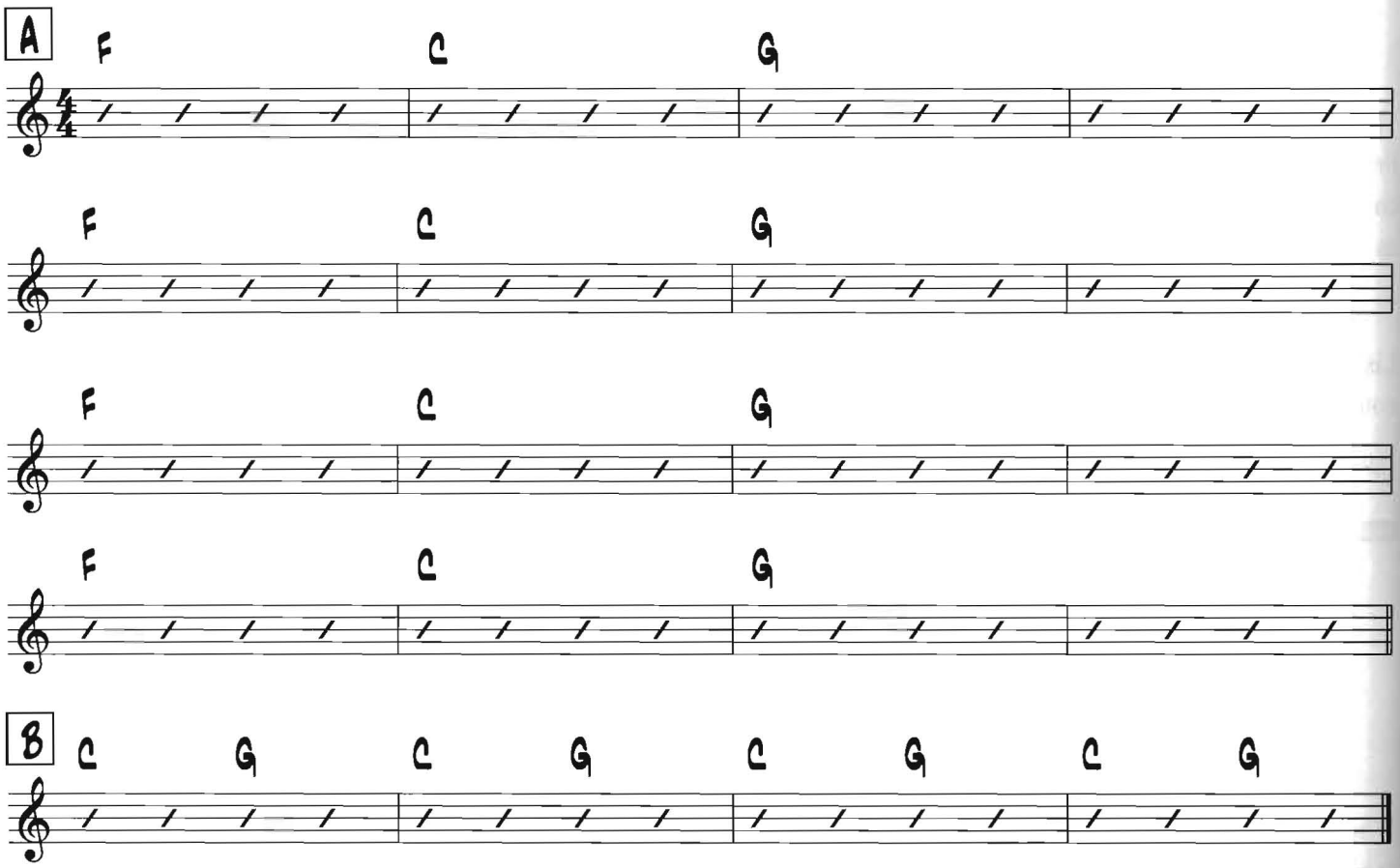
LESSON 23
IMPROVISATION

FORM AND ARRANGEMENT

Before you read the next paragraph, listen to the recording and try to figure out the form and arrangement by ear. How would you describe the two different ideas? How long does each section of the form last? Is there an introduction or ending? Listen for the chord changes. For how many measures or beats does each chord last? Write down as much information as you can. Later, you can check your answers against the written bass part in lesson 28.

This tune has a 20-bar AB form. Part A has an active riff that builds a lot of tension. It lasts for sixteen measures. Part B is less active than the first part. It lasts for four measures. There is a four-measure introduction at the beginning of the tune that comes from the B section.

LISTEN **40** PLAY

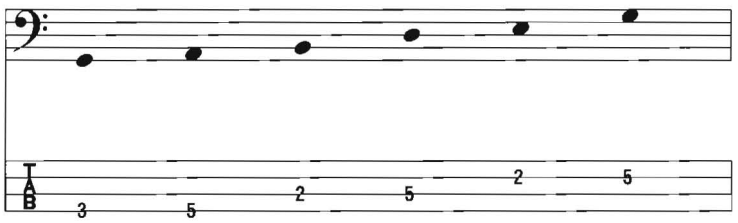


Listen for the chord changes, and play along using just the chord roots F, C, and G. Play the roots using the riff rhythms.

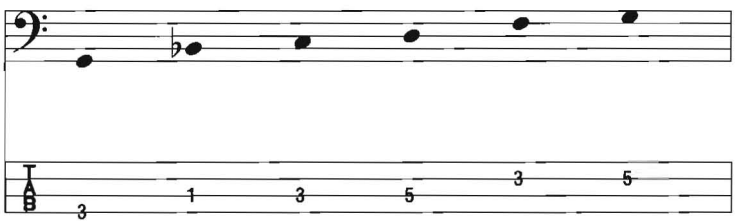
IDEAS FOR IMPROVISING BASS LINES

SCALE

In this tune, use notes from the G major pentatonic scale to improvise during the the A section.



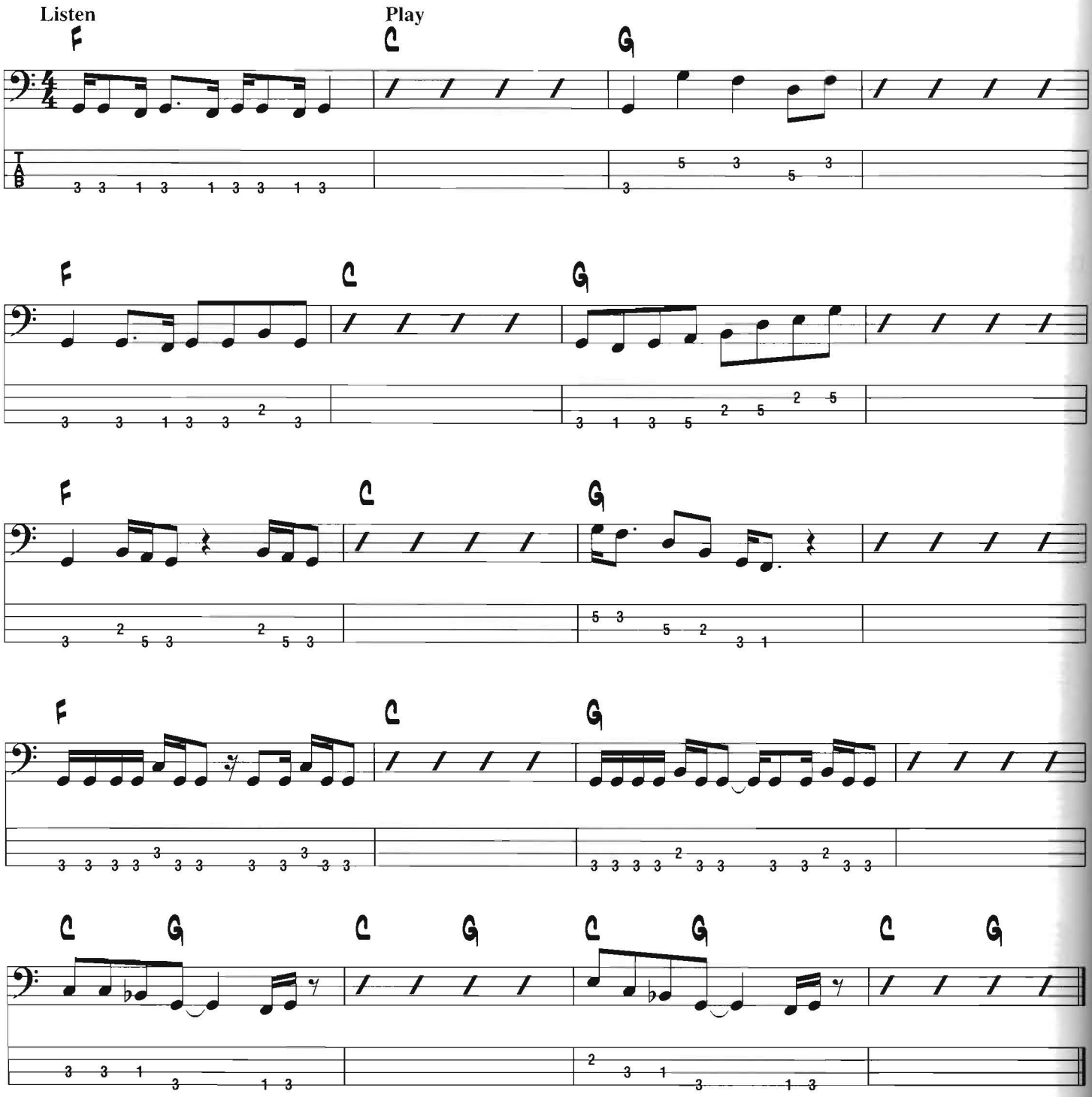
Use notes from the G minor pentatonic scale to improvise during the B section.



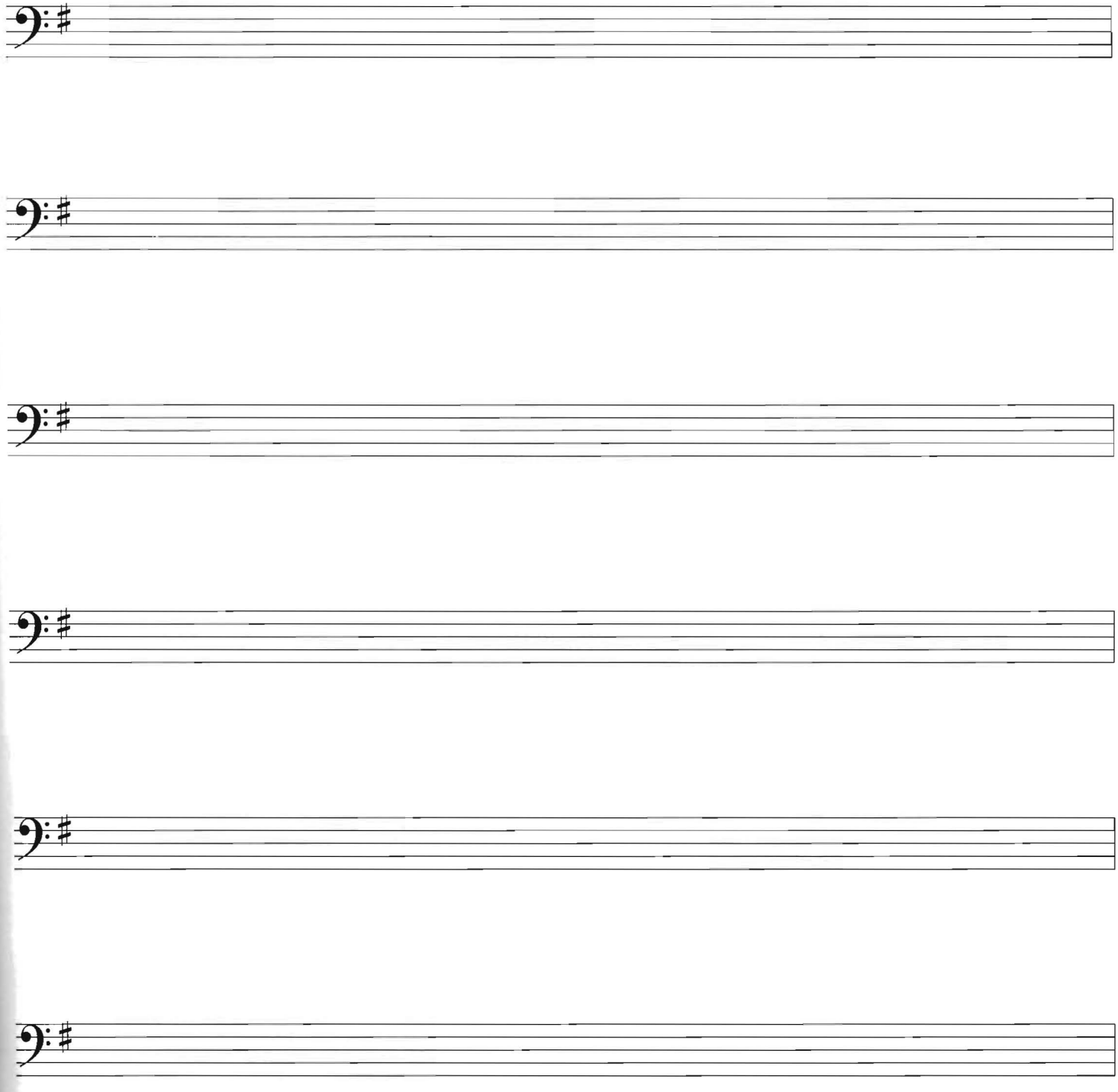
CALL AND RESPONSE

1. Echo each phrase, exactly as you hear it.
2. Improvise an answer to each phrase. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the phrase you hear, and use the notes from the G pentatonic scales.

LISTEN 43 PLAY



Write out a few of your own ideas for rock bass lines, using any of the techniques you have learned.



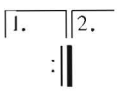
LISTEN 44 PLAY

Create a solo using any licks you have played. Memorize your solo, and practice it along with the recording.

LESSON 24
READING

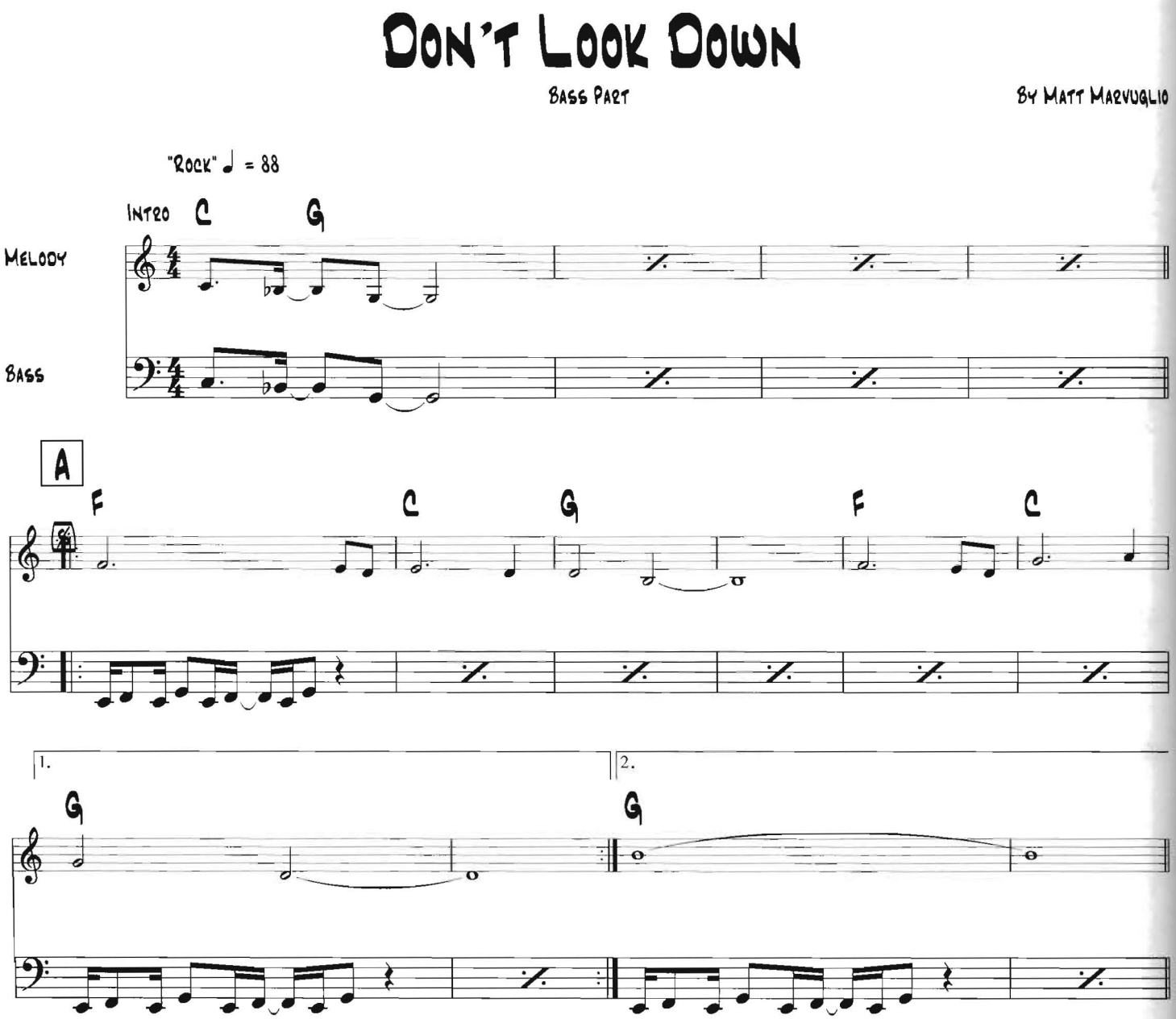
BASS PART

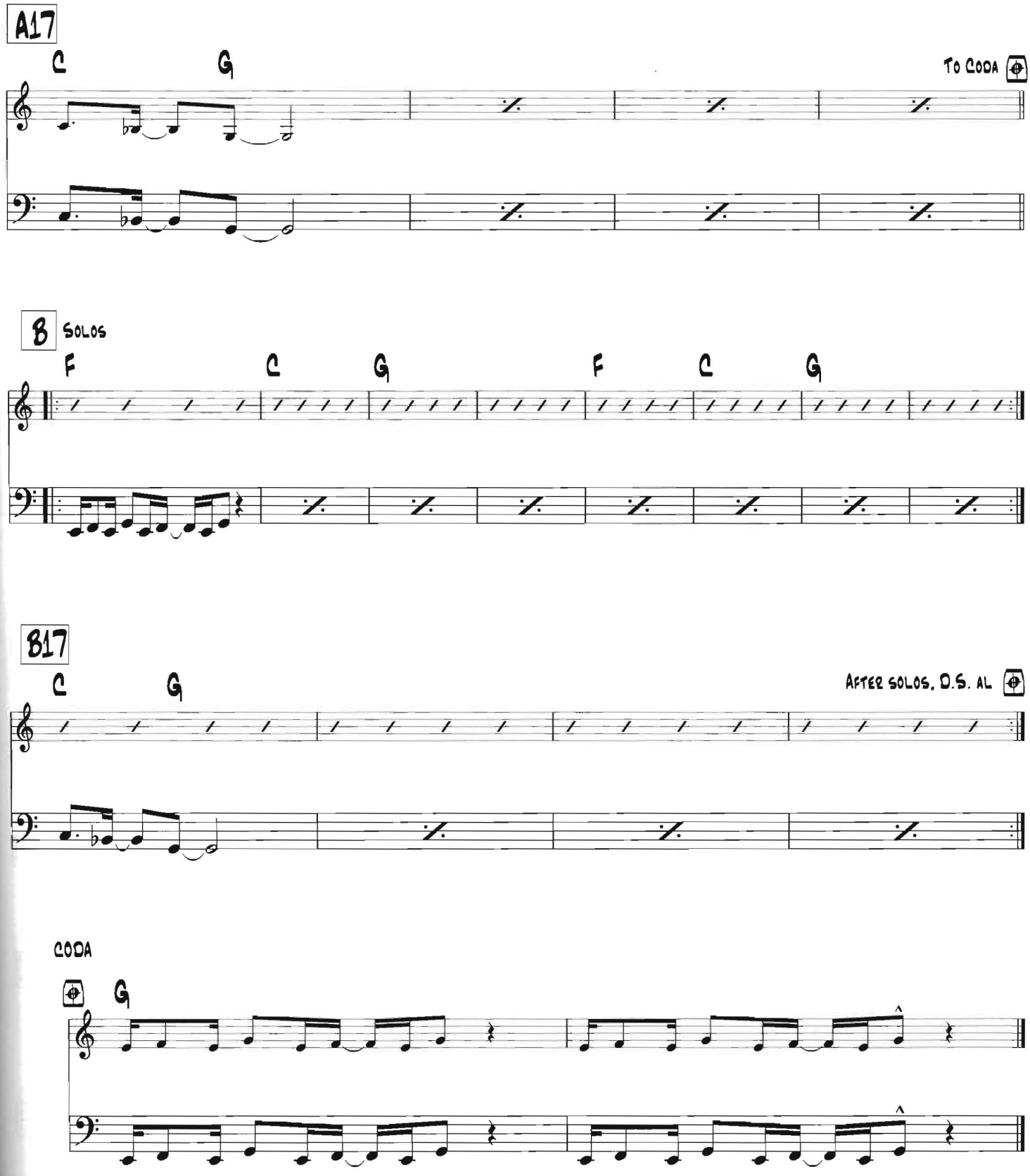
Play "Don't Look Down" along with the recording. Use the written the bass part.



First and second ending markings. The first time you play these measures, play the *first ending*—the measures under the number 1. Then return to the begin-repeat sign (‖:). The second time, skip the first ending and play the *second ending*—the measures under the number 2. Then, continue through the rest of the form.

LISTEN 44 PLAY

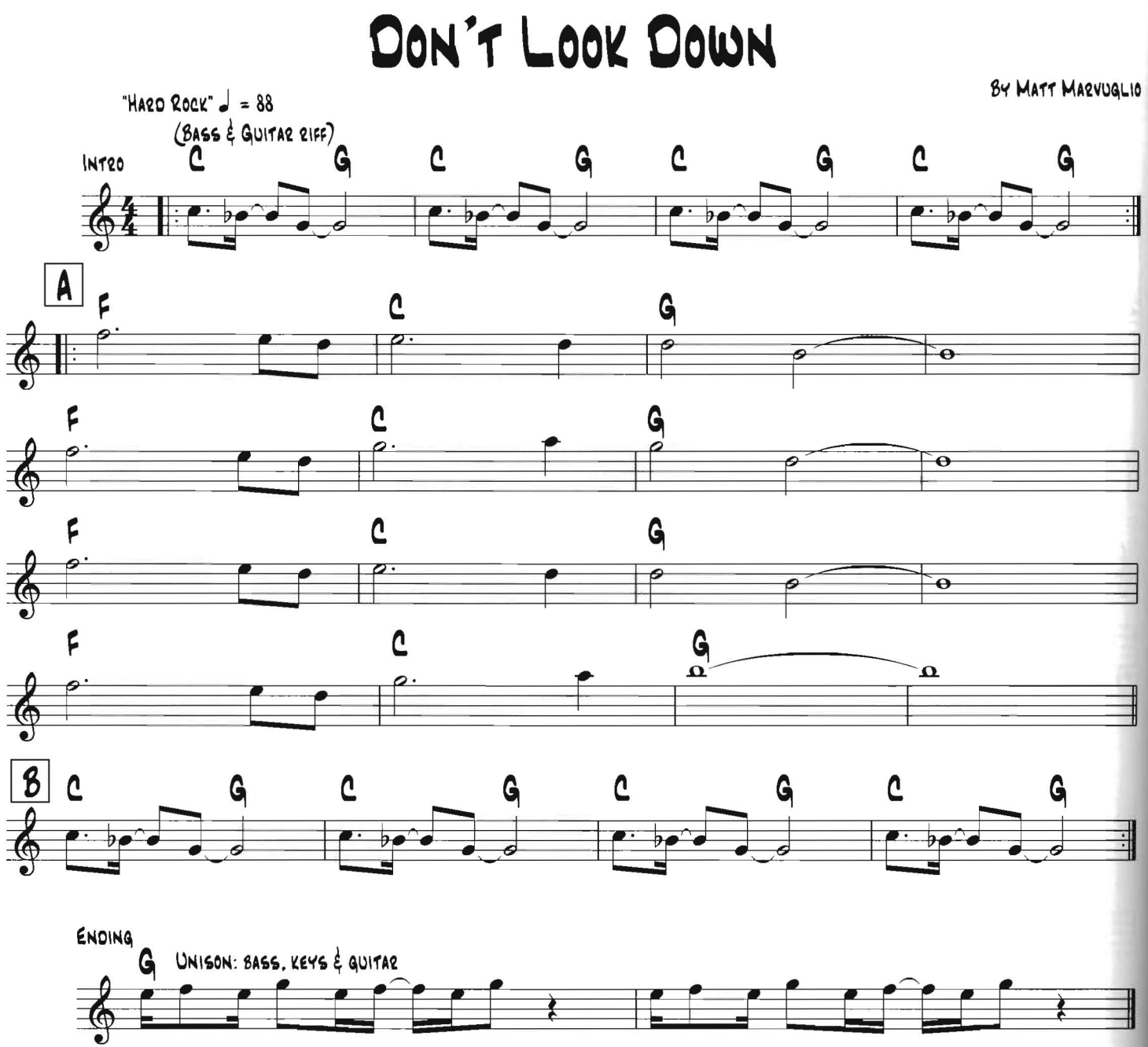



A17
C
G
To Coda
B
Solos
F
C
G
F
C
G
B17
C
G
After solos, D.S. al
Coda
G

LEAD SHEET

Play "Don't Look Down" along with the recording, and follow the lead sheet. This lead sheet shows the bass riff (also played by the guitar). If you prefer, create your own bass part.

LISTEN 44 PLAY



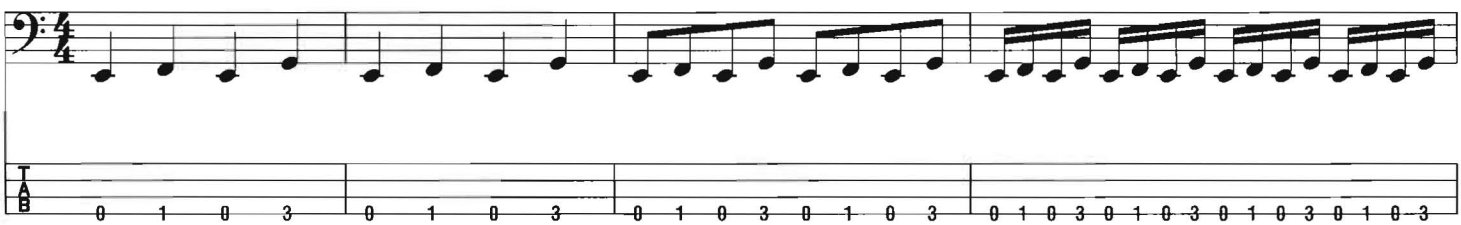
PERFORMANCE TIP

When you play from a lead sheet, use it to help you keep your place. Even when you keep repeating the same lick, follow the melody and chords. They are played by other instruments.

CHAPTER VI
DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE

TECHNIQUE

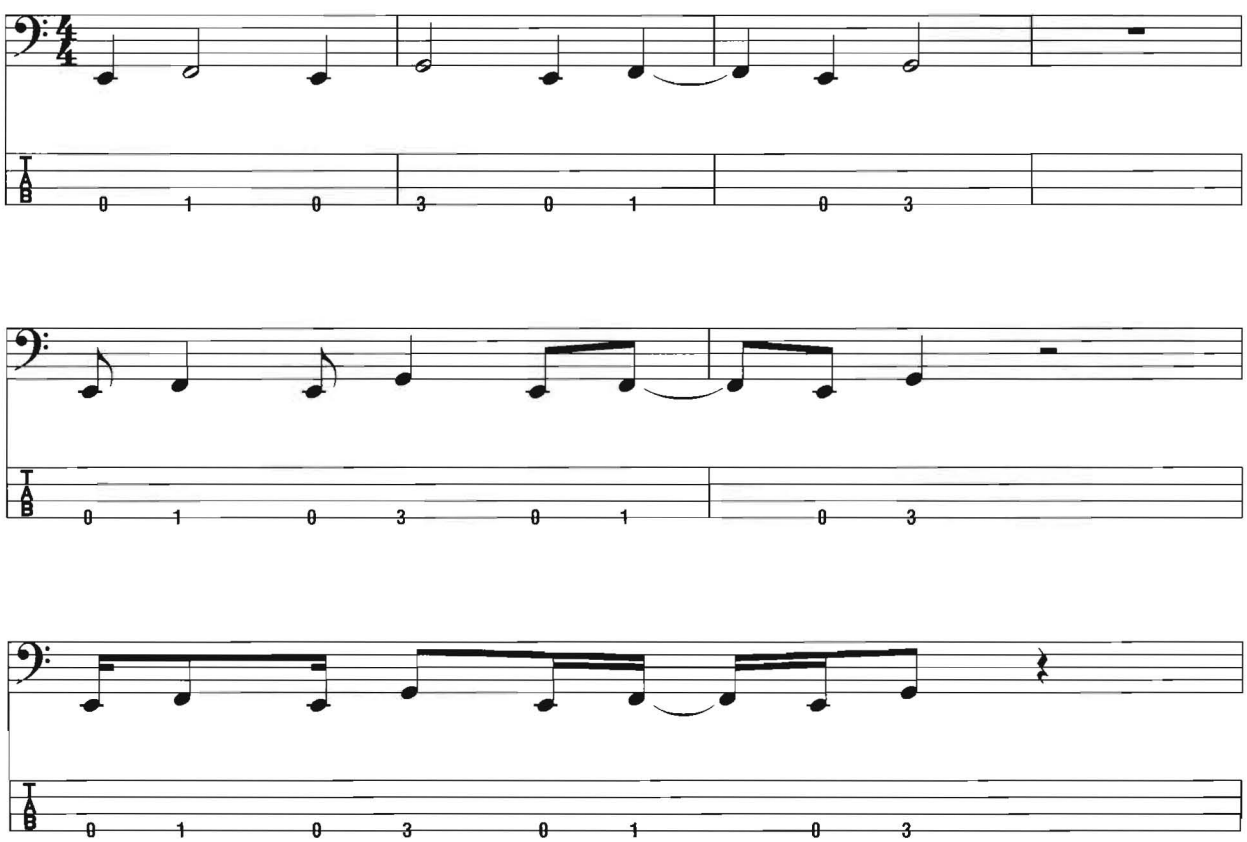
This exercise will help your finger dexterity and chops, and will help limber you up for the more syncopated riffs used in the tune. Try the same pattern on the other strings as well. It will always be the same fingering and fret positions—open string (E), first finger (F), and third or fourth finger on the G.



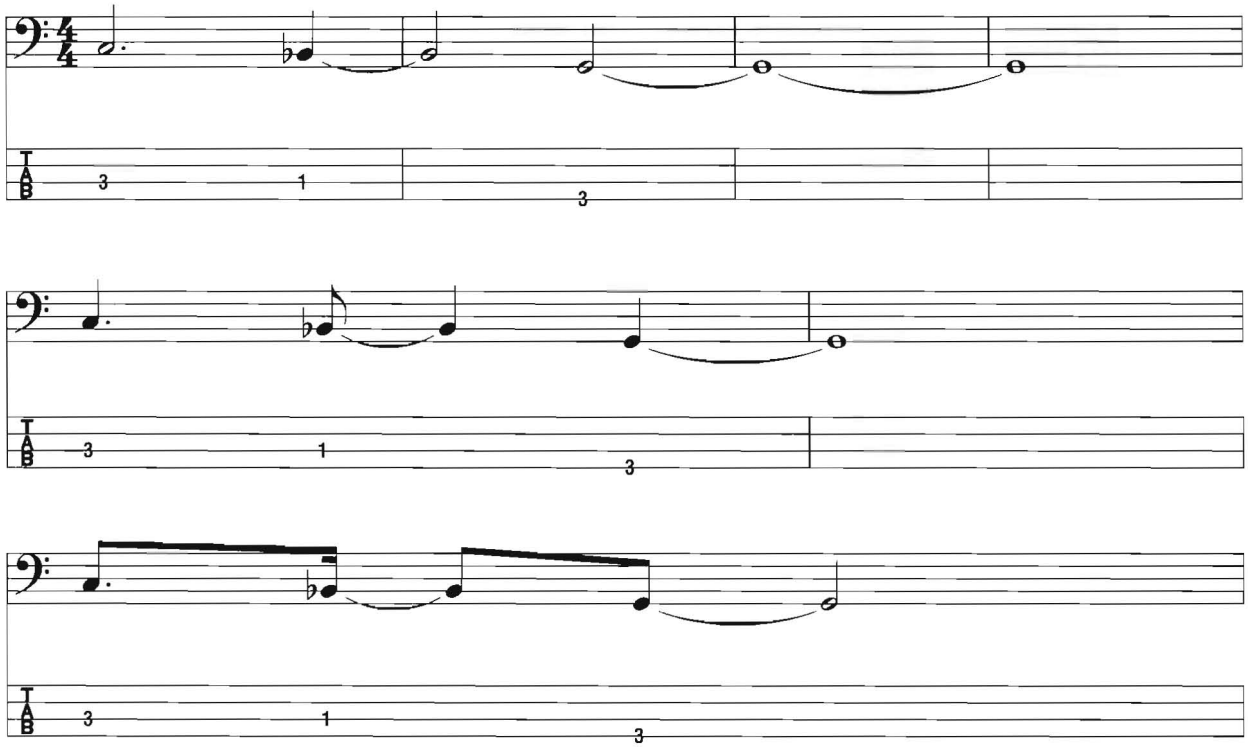
SYNCOPATION PRACTICE

Syncopated rhythms can be learned by expanding them into an easily readable form. The following examples illustrates this. In each line, the rhythm is exactly the same. It is just represented by different note lengths.

First Part

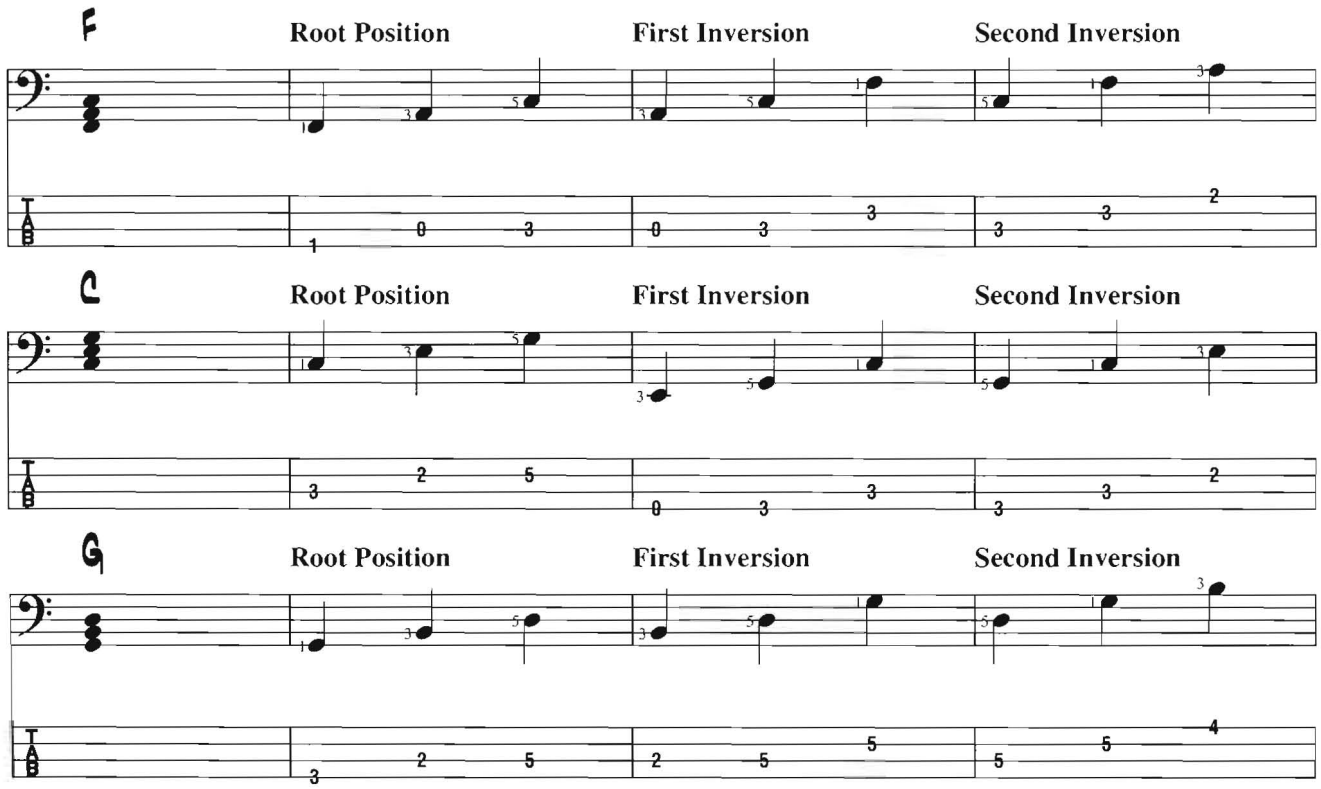


Second Part



INVERSIONS

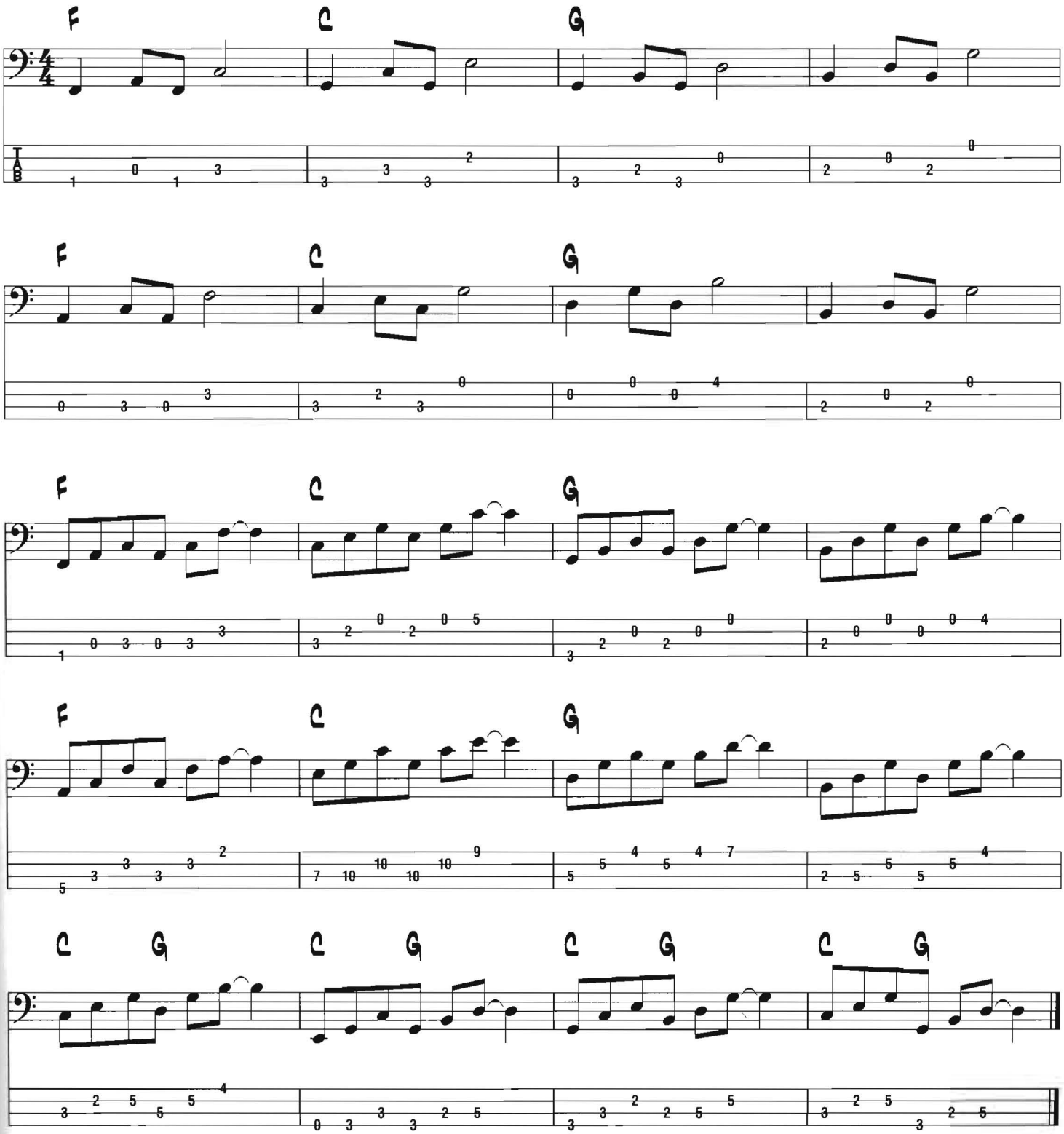
Part of your technique is being able to play chords in different *inversions*. An inversion is an arrangement of chord tones. Practice these inversions for the "Don't Look Down" chords.



Inversion Practice

Practice this inversion exercise along with the recording. Become familiar with the sound of each chord and each inversion. Try using different inversions when creating bass lines for "Don't Look Down."

LISTEN 44 PLAY

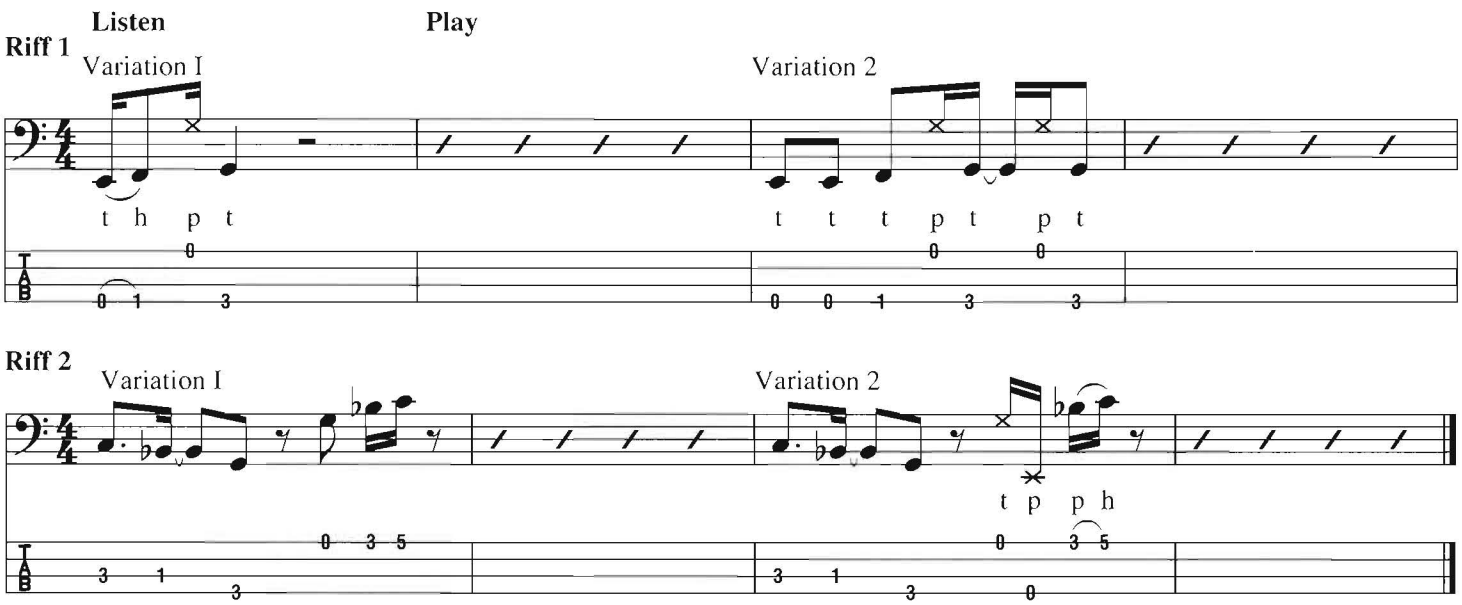


VARIATIONS

In hard rock, the written bass riff is often as important to the tune as the melody. A major change to a hard rock riff may have a big impact on how the tune sounds. Many bass players will play a tune like this exactly as it is written or first recorded—every time they play it. This makes it more easily recognizable. If you vary the bass line, consider keeping it similar to the original. The variations that follow sound a lot like the original.

Practice each variation, and imitate the sound of the recording.

LISTEN 45 PLAY



LISTEN 44 PLAY

Play these variations of the "Don't Look Down" riffs along with the recording.

MEMORIZE

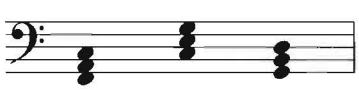
Create a new bass line and solo to "Don't Look Down." Practice it with the recording, and memorize it.

SUMMARY

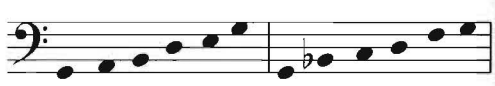
FORM
1 CHORUS = 20 BARS
AB FORM
A: 16M.
B: 4 M.

ARRANGEMENT
INTRO: 4 M.
1 CHORUS MELODY
1 CHORUS SOLO
1 CHORUS MELODY
END: 2 M.

HARMONY
F C G



SCALE
G MAJOR PENTATONIC
G MINOR PENTATONIC



PLAY "DON'T LOOK DOWN" WITH YOUR OWN BAND!

PLAYING BOSSA NOVA

CHAPTER VII

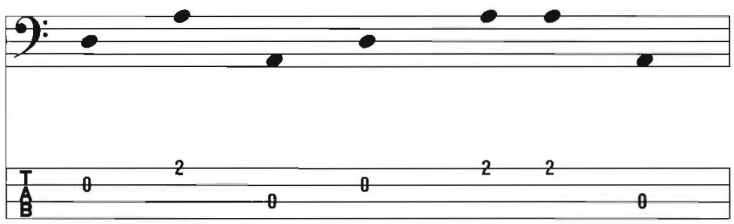
"Take Your Time" is a *bossa nova* tune. Bossa nova began in Brazil, combining American jazz and an Afro-Brazilian form of dance music called *samba*. To hear more bossa nova, listen to Stan Getz, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Eliane Elias, Astrud Gilberto, Flora Purim, Dave Valentine, and Spyro Gyra.

LESSON 25
TECHNIQUE/THEORY

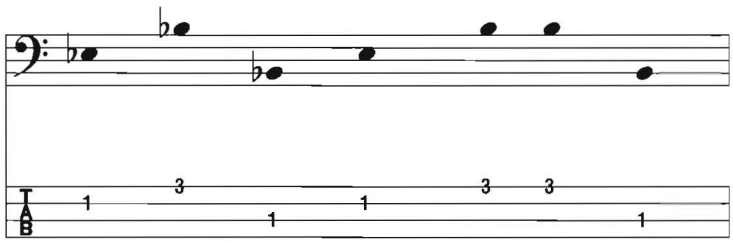
LISTEN 46 PLAY

Listen to "Take Your Time," and play along with the recording. Try to match the bass. In this tune, the bass line has two parts.

Here is the first part:



Here is the second part:



Notice that the second part is really a transposition of the first part.

HAND POSITION

Play these licks in two ways: first, in first position, and then in fifth position. Notice how different the fingered strings and the open strings sound. Which feels more comfortable? Choose which position you prefer.

LESSON 26
LEARNING THE GROOVE

HOOKING UP TO BOSSA NOVA

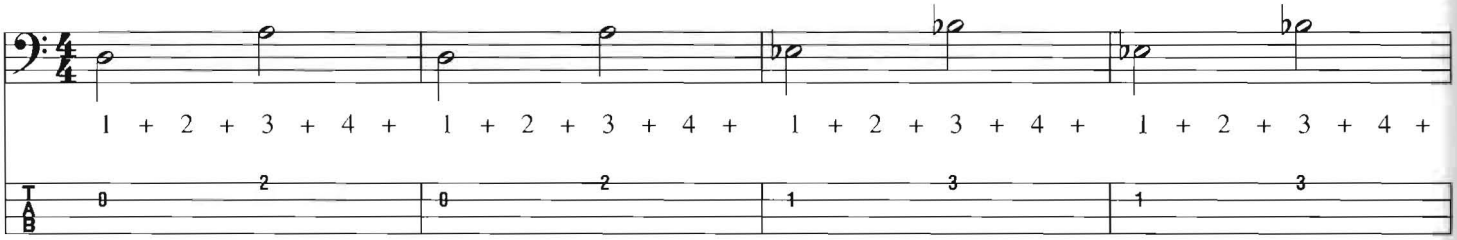
LISTEN 46 PLAY

Listen to "Take Your Time." This tune is a bossa nova, a style of music that originated in Brazil. Throughout the tune, a two-bar rhythmic pattern repeats. This repeating pattern is an essential part of bossa nova. The drum plays it on a rim click.

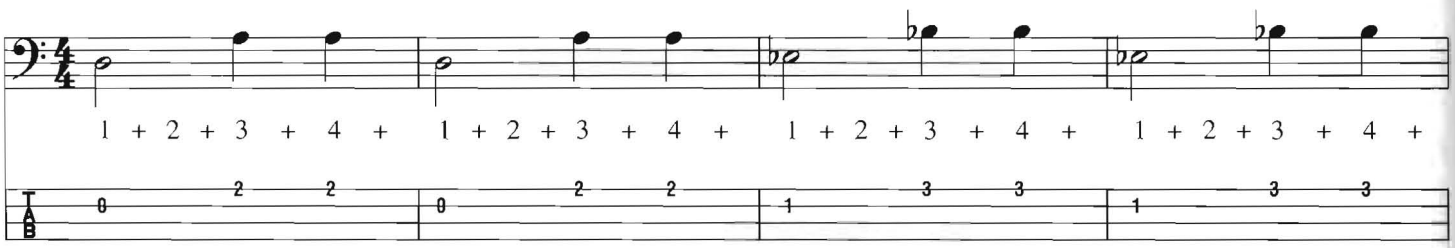
Repeating rhythmic structures are at the heart of much African-based music, including Afro-Caribbean and most South and Latin American styles.

The tune begins with a drum solo that sets up the bossa nova groove. Then the bass joins in, hooking up with the syncopated rimshot, as well as the bass drum. Bossa nova (sometimes just called *bossa*) has a straight eighth-note feel.

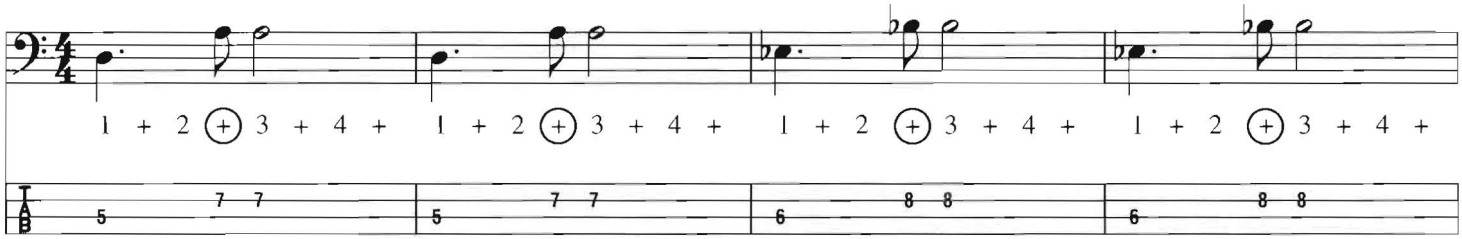
Bossa bass lines can be very simple. You can just play half notes, and it will sound fine. Play this half-note bass line with the recording, and count out eighth notes.



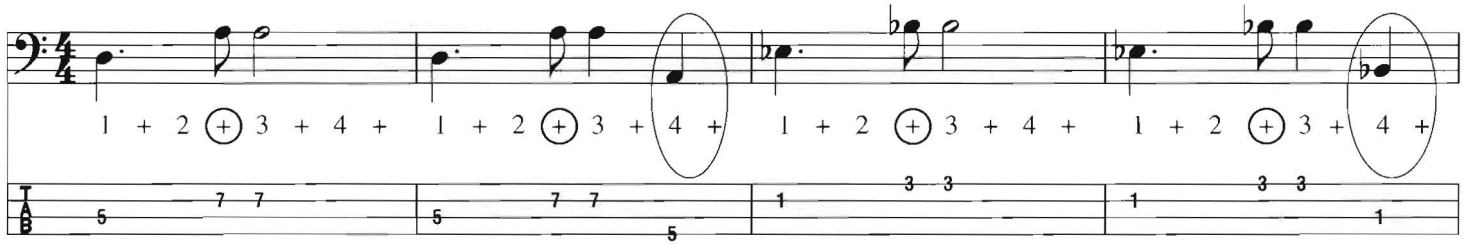
Here is a variation, with slightly more motion, using quarter notes:



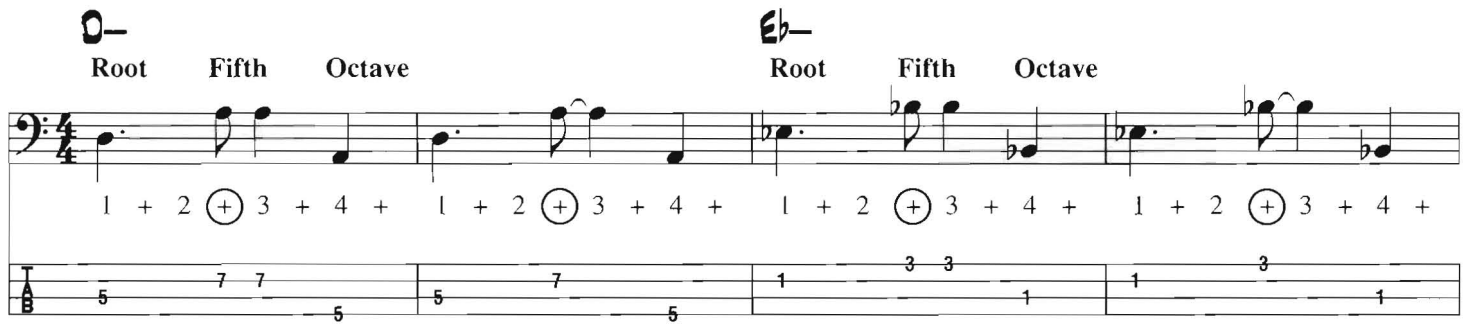
Rhythm is what makes bossa nova unique—especially the "+" of beat 2. The drum beat will always play this critical syncopation, and the bass and other instruments can hook up with it too. Play this simple syncopated bossa nova bass line:



These examples all use single-measure licks. However, you can also have licks that last for two measures. You can change every other measure, and make the whole line more interesting. Dropping the octave is a common variation.



Play the written lick with the recording again, and notice its syncopated second beat. Also notice that the line uses only chord roots, fifths, and octaves.

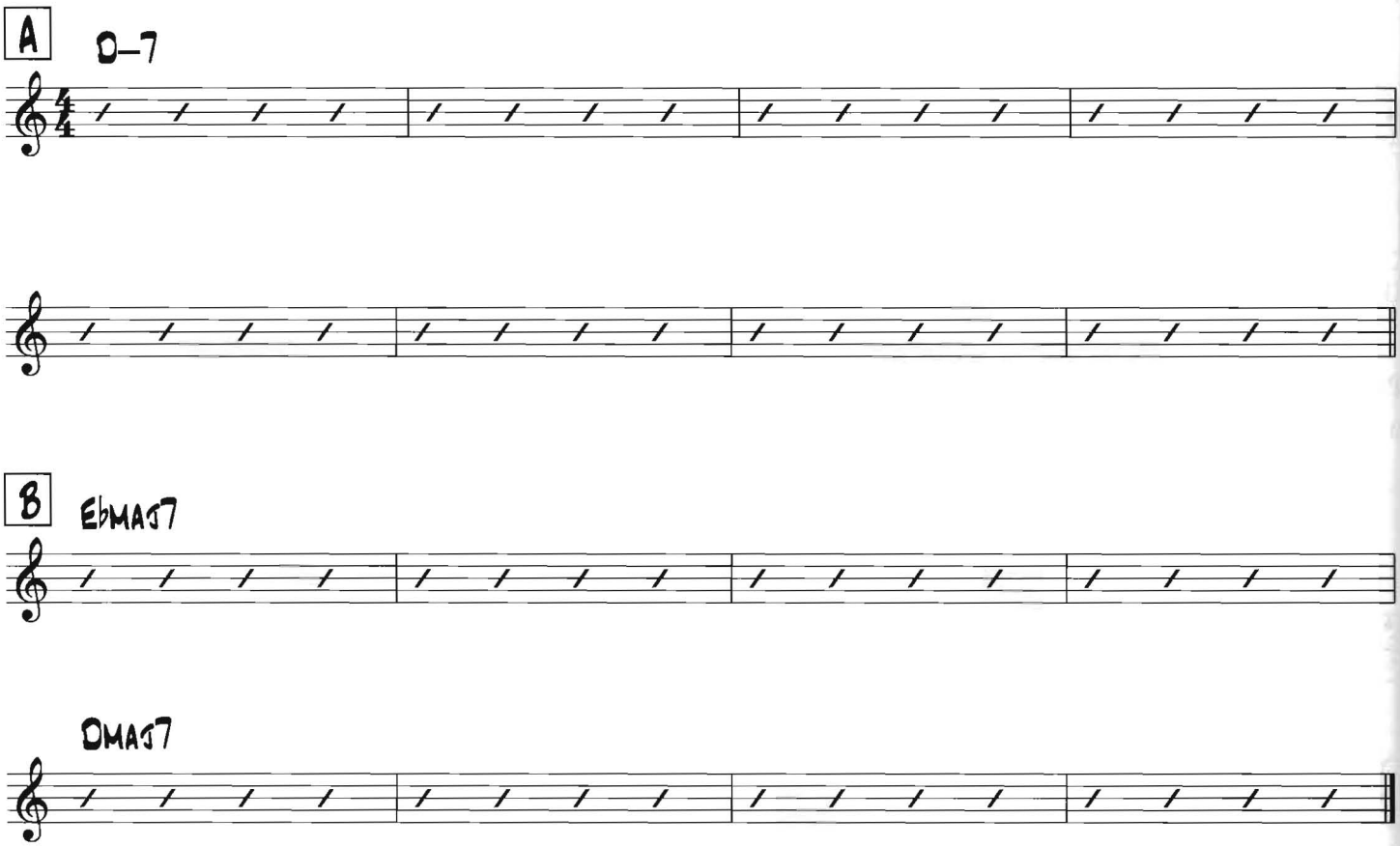


LESSON 27
IMPROVISATION

FORM AND ARRANGEMENT

Listen to "Take Your Time" and follow the form. This tune follows a 16-bar AB form. Each phrase of the melody lasts for eight measures.

LISTEN 46 PLAY



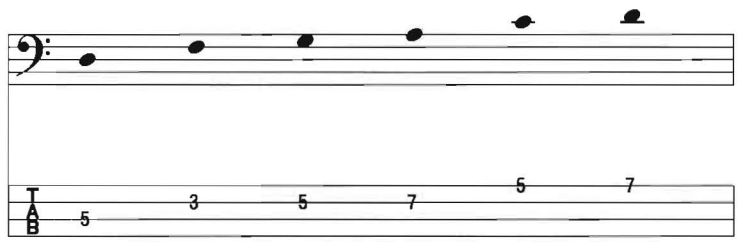
What is the arrangement on the recording? Figure it out by ear, and then check your answer against the summary at the end of this chapter.

BOSSA NOVA BASS LINES

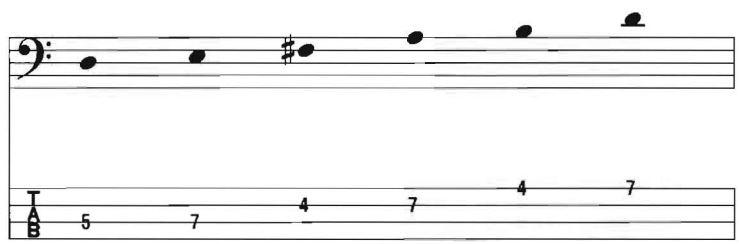
Bossa nova bass lines usually have two notes: the root and fifth. You can also play octaves. Always play the chord root on the first beat of every measure. Bossa bass lines tend to be simple, with notes often held for more than just one beat.

SCALE

In this tune, use notes from the D minor pentatonic scale to improvise during the D–7 and E♭MAJ7 chords on the first twelve bars.



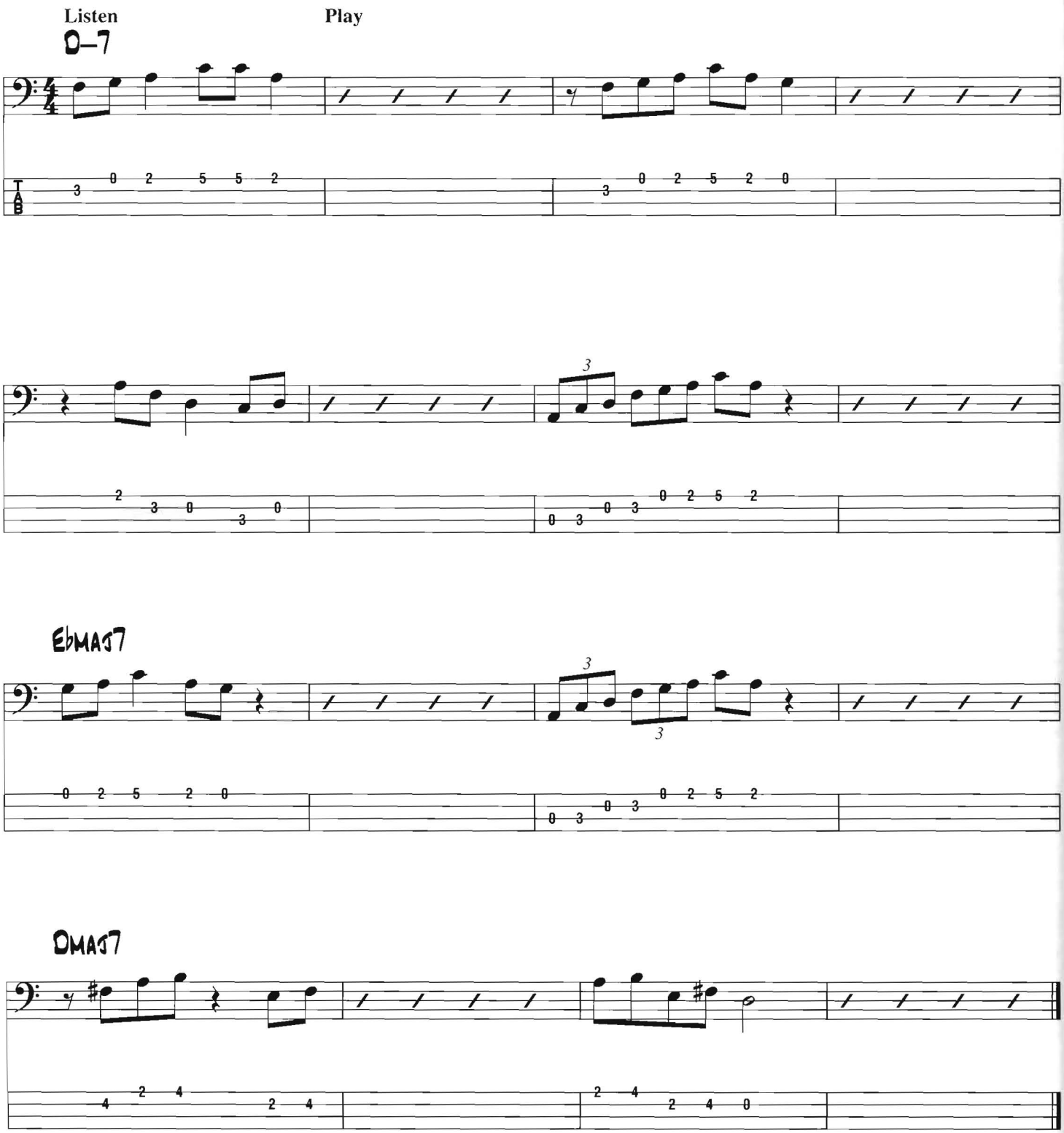
Use notes from the D major pentatonic scale to improvise during the DMAJ7 chord on the last four bars.



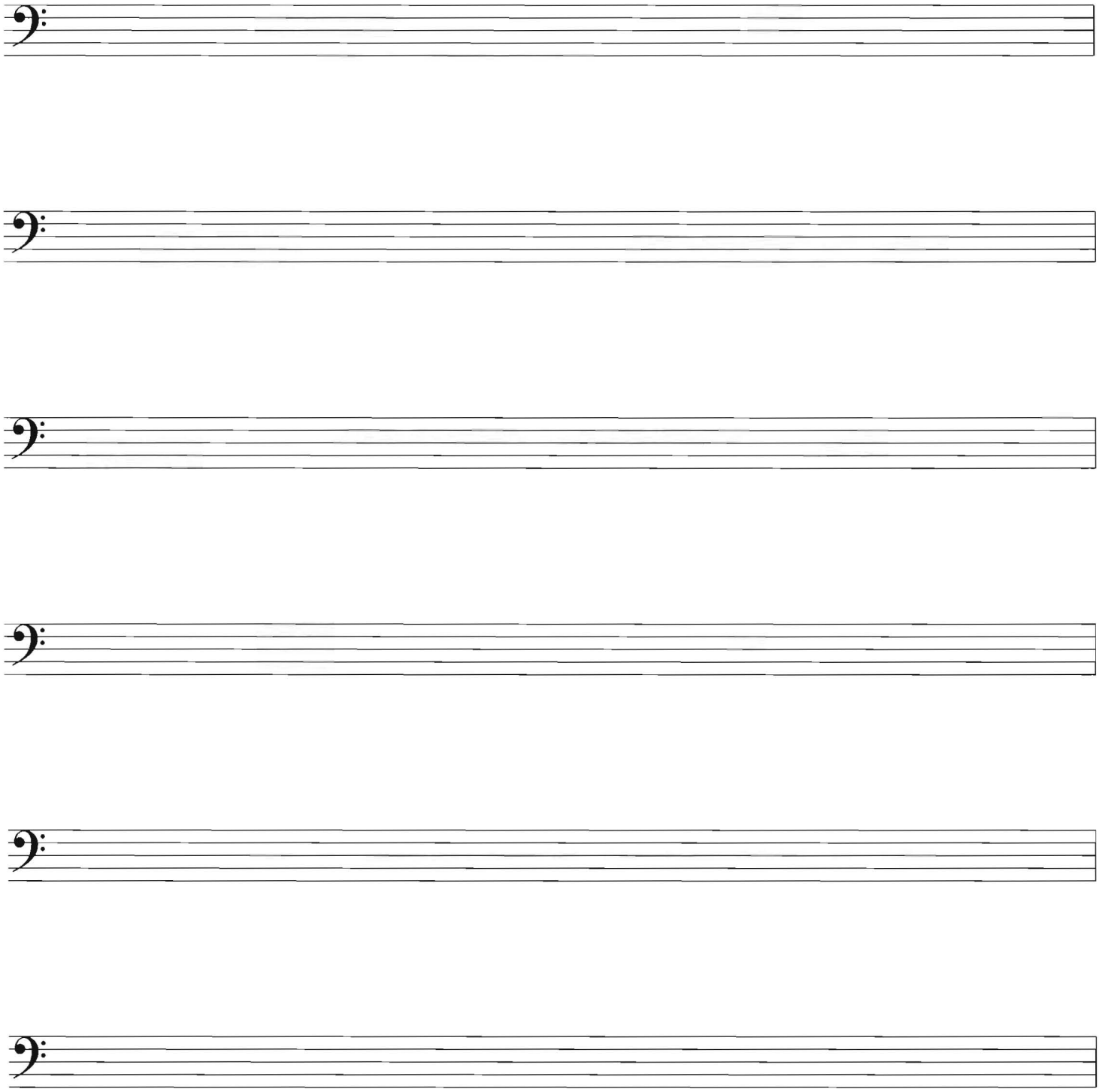
CALL AND RESPONSE

1. Echo each lick, exactly as you hear it.
2. Improvise an answer to each lick. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the lick you hear, and use the notes from the D pentatonic scales.

LISTEN 47 PLAY



Write out a few of your own ideas for a bossa-nova bass line, using any of the techniques you have learned.



LISTEN 48 PLAY

Create a solo using any licks you have played. Memorize your solo, and practice it along with the recording.

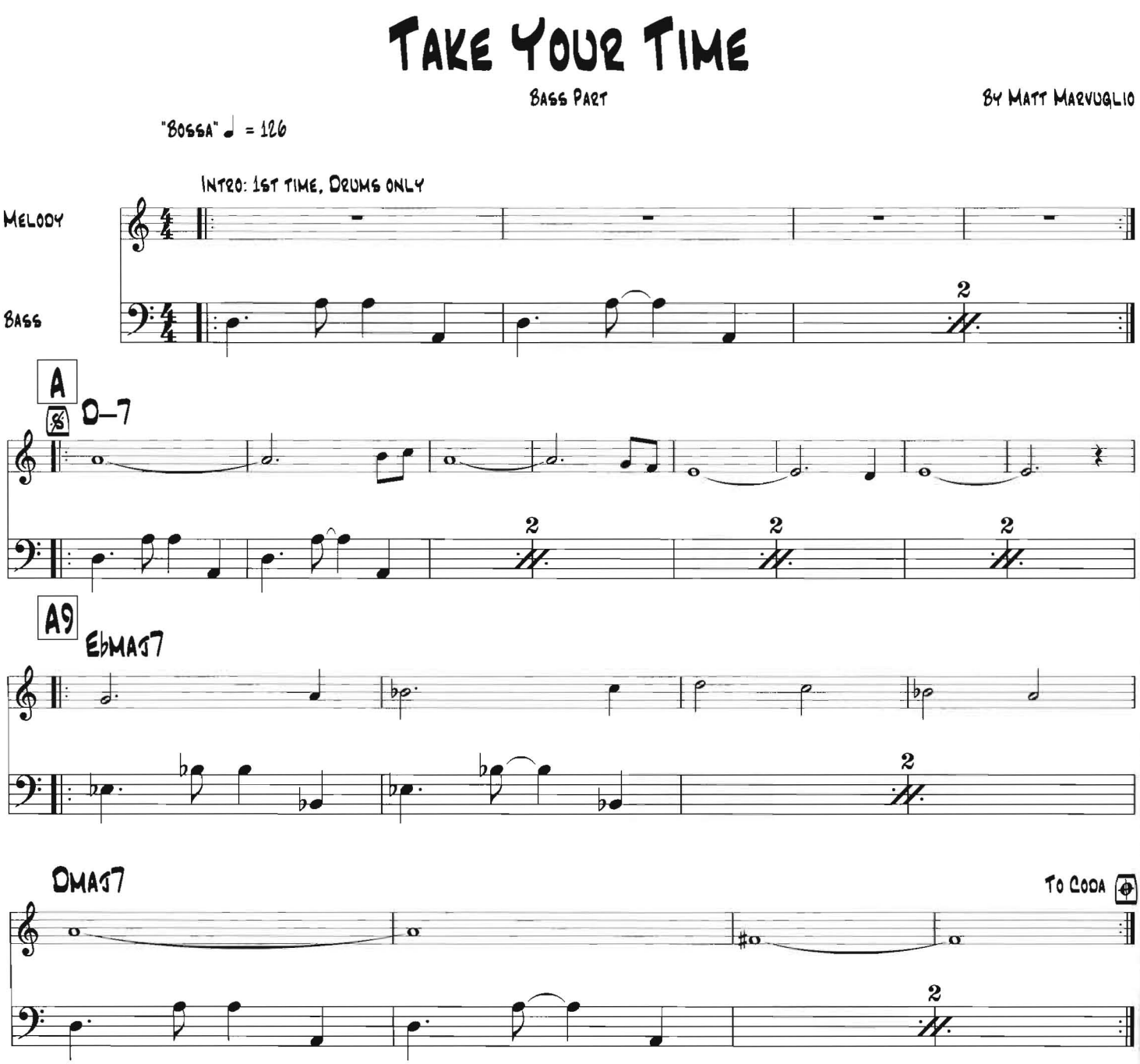
LESSON 28
READING

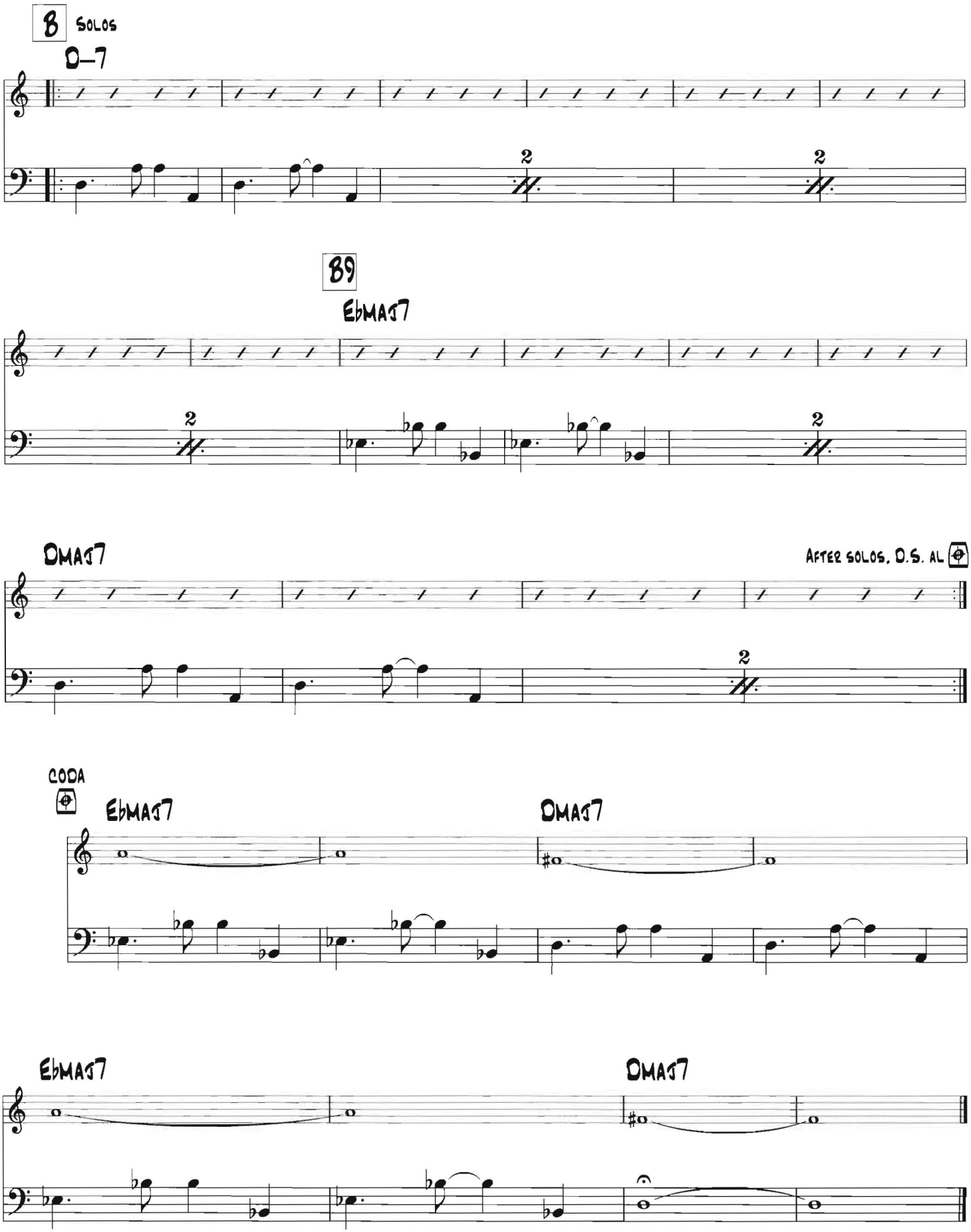
BASS PART

Two-measure repeat. Repeat the previously-notated two measures.

Play "Take Your Time" from the part and use the written bass line.

LISTEN 48 PLAY

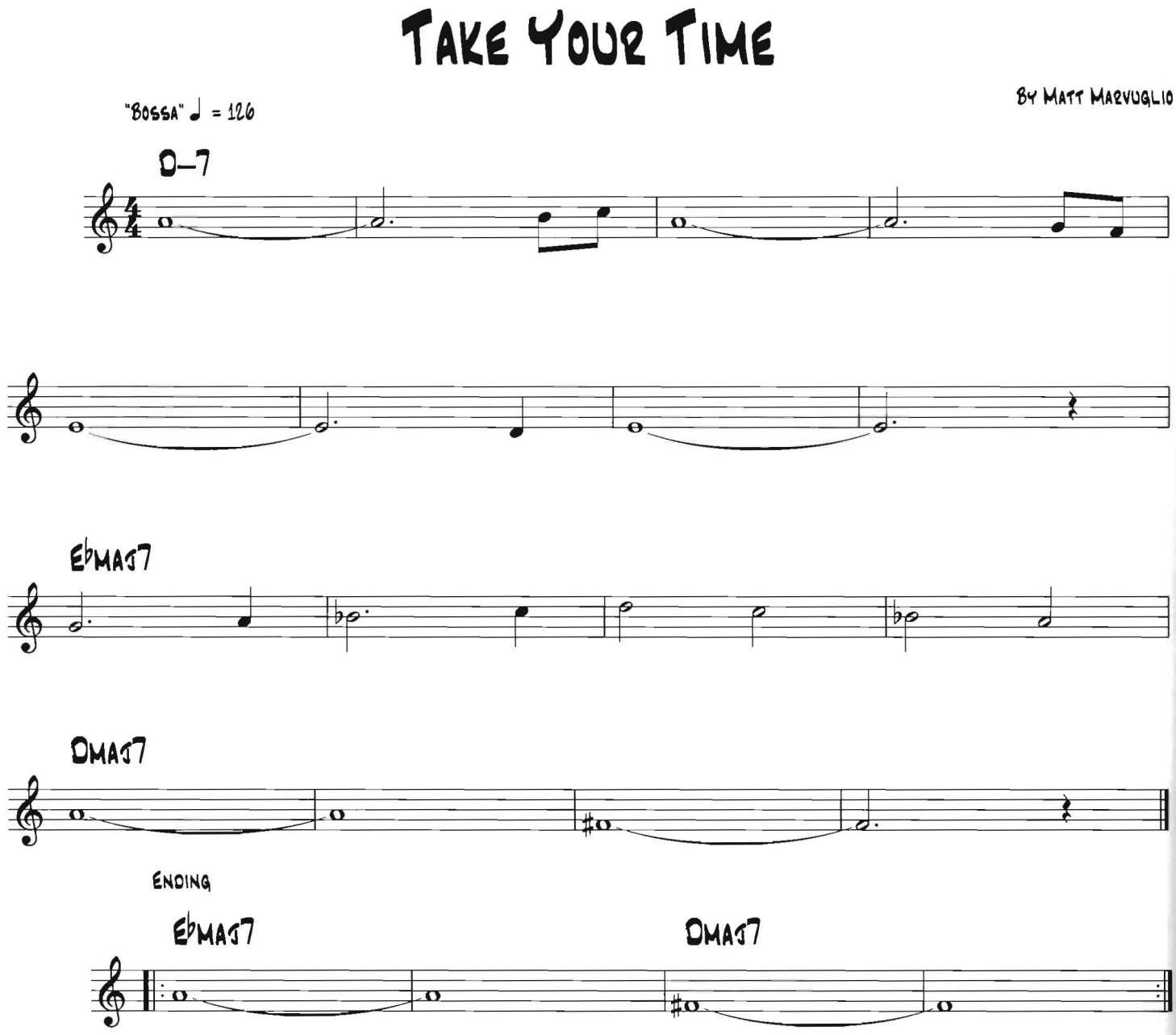



8 SOLOS
D–7
2
2
89
EbMAJ7
2
2
DMAJ7
AFTER SOLOS, D.S. AL
2
CODA
EbMAJ7
DMAJ7
EbMAJ7
DMAJ7

LEAD SHEET

Play "Take Your Time" and follow the lead sheet. Use your own bass line.

LISTEN 48 PLAY



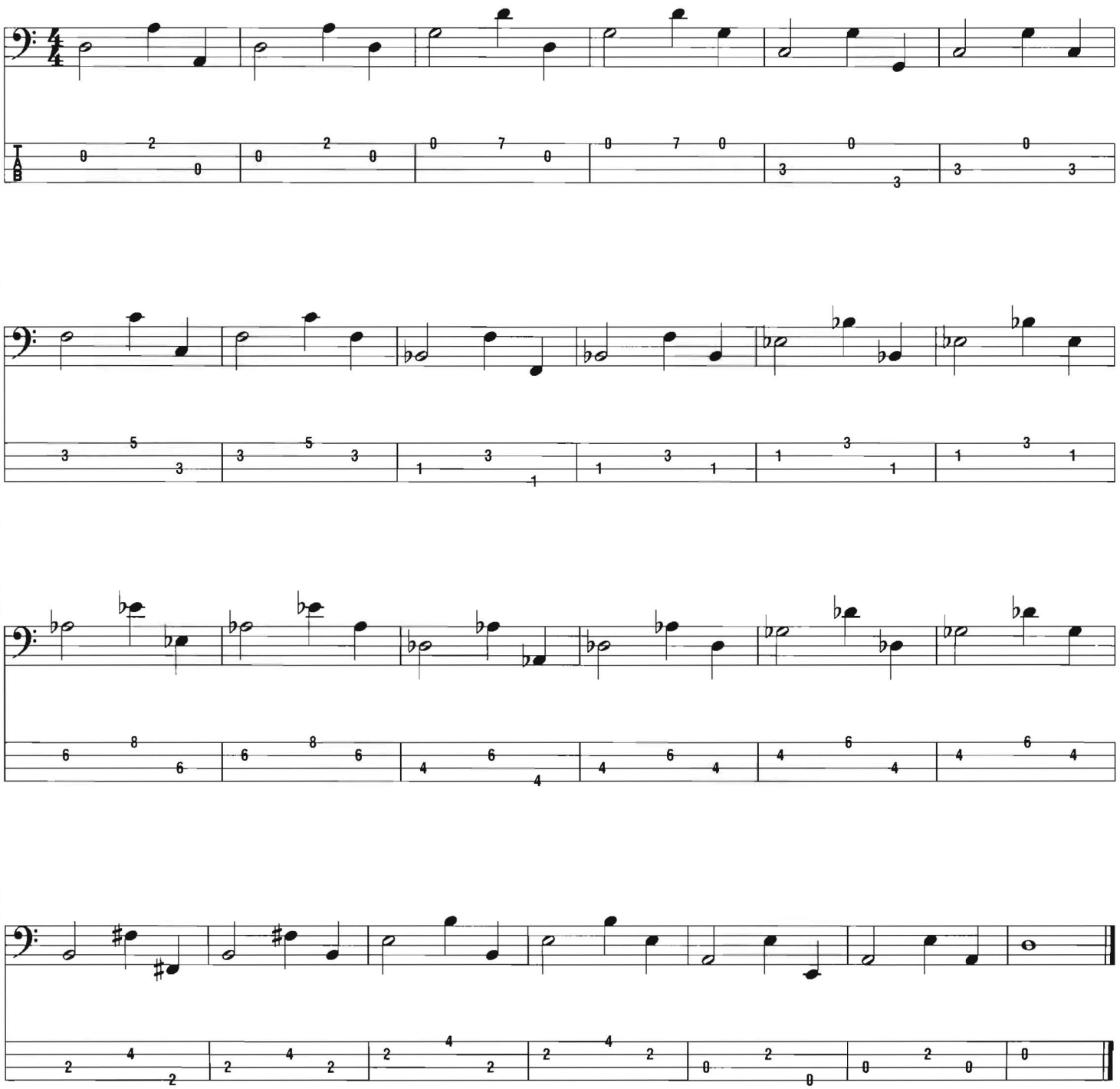
PERFORMANCE TIP

Play the recorded bass line at the head, and then improvise a bass line during solos. The improvised bass line should support the soloist.

CHAPTER VII
DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE

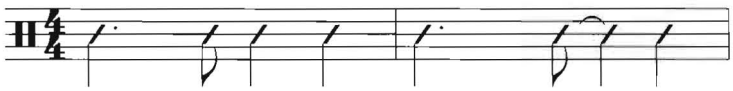
HAND POSITION

Practice this exercise only lifting the fingers about a quarter of an inch above the string. You could pretend that you're trying to keep your fingering system a secret. Anyone looking at your fingers should not be able to distinguish which notes you are playing just by watching them.



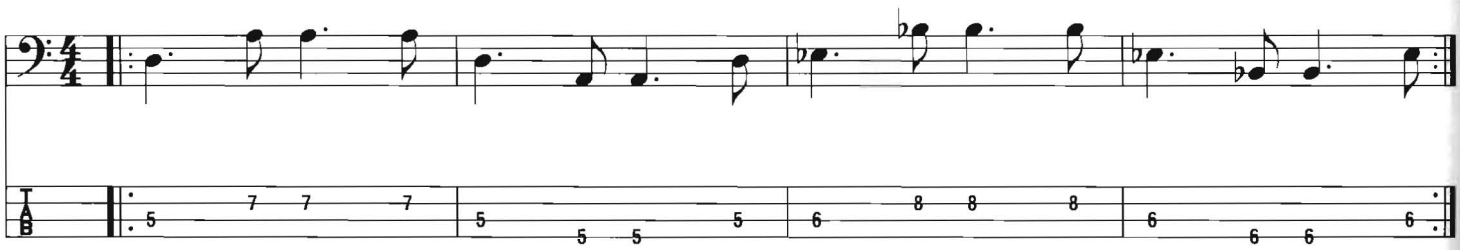
CHALLENGE

Try the above exercise again, this time varying the rhythm. Use the rhythm below. Then play it again with your own rhythms.

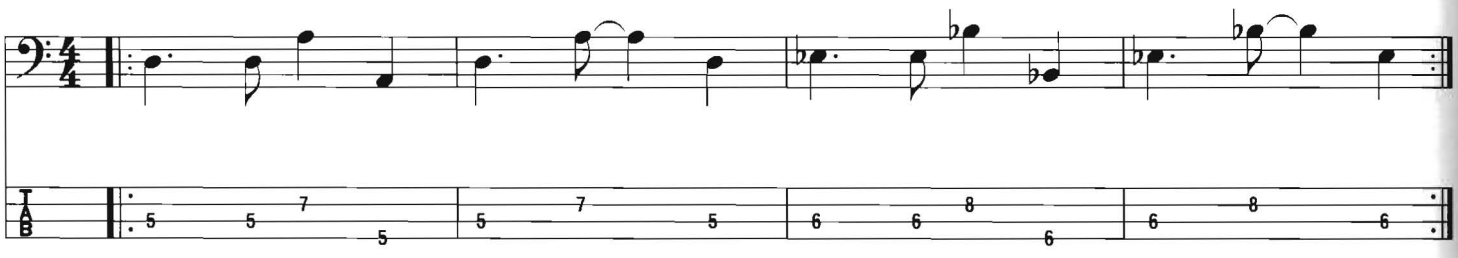


SYNCOPATION PRACTICE

This syncopated line uses just roots and fifths. Listen to the even eighth notes in the hi-hat as you play this variation of the bass line, and notice the click on beats 2 and 4.



This next variation includes tied notes, creating syncopation. This syncopation provides a more "forward sounding" bass line. Keep those even eighth notes going in your head!



IMPROVISE

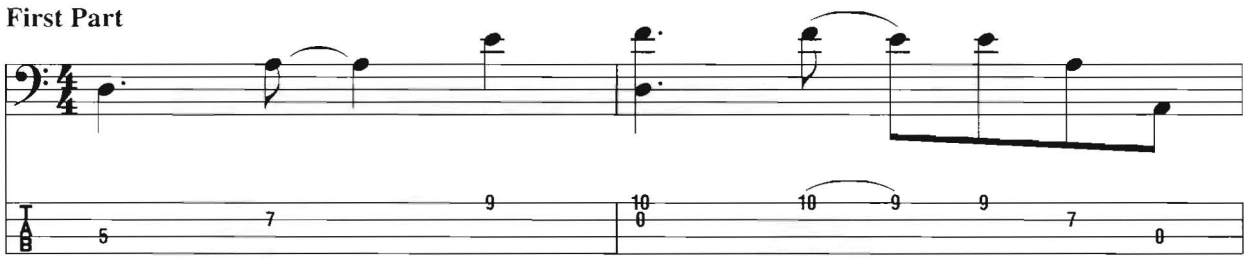
Reading from the lead sheet in lesson 28, play along with the recording. Improvise a line of just half notes, playing only roots and fifths. When you feel comfortable with the form and fingering, use your own rhythms.

CHALLENGE

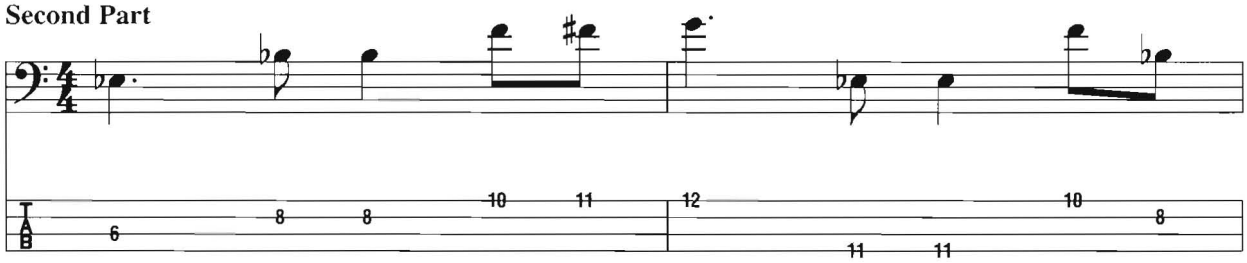
Try these hip variations to "Take Your Time." Practice them along with the recording.

LISTEN 48 PLAY

First Part



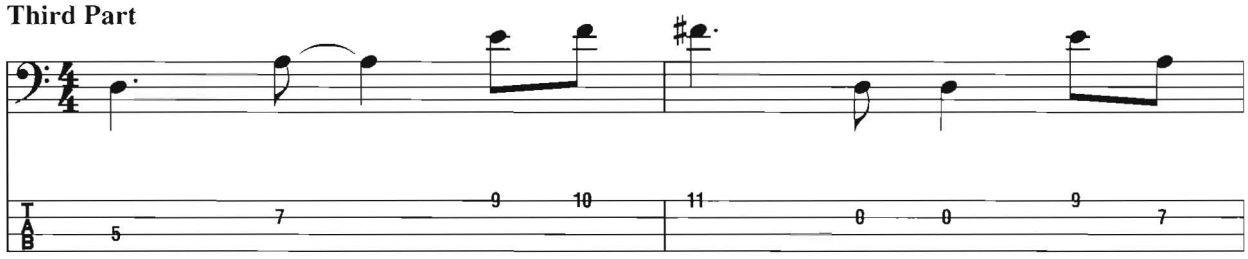
Second Part



PRACTICE TIP

In the "Second Part," second measure, the E♭ is played on the E string. While it can be fingered on the A string, as in the first measure, the fingering shown is easier because it requires less hand motion. This type of fingering is called a *cross string*.

Third Part



MEMORIZE

LISTEN 48 PLAY

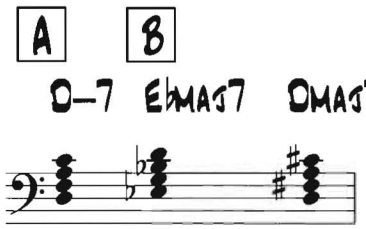
Create a new bass line and solo to "Take Your Time." Practice it along with the recording, and memorize it.

SUMMARY

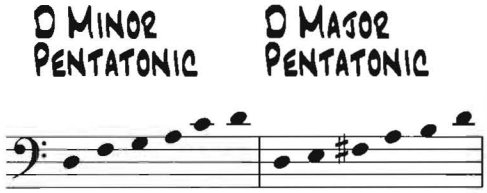
FORM
16-BAR AB
(1 CHORUS = 16 BARS)
A: 8 M.
B: 8 M.

ARRANGEMENT
INTRO: 8 M.
2 CHORUS MELODY
2 CHORUS SOLO
1 CHORUS MELODY
END: 8 M.

HARMONY



SCALE



PLAY "TAKE YOUR TIME" WITH YOUR OWN BAND!

PLAYING STOP TIME

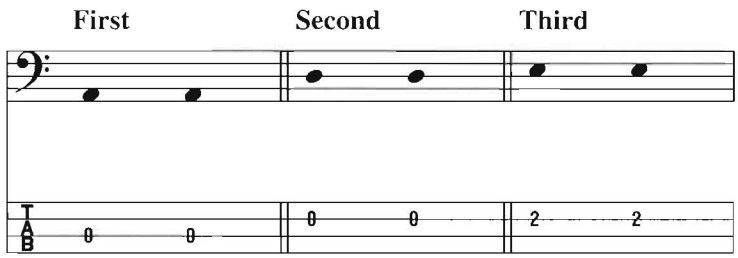
CHAPTER VIII

"Stop It" is a blues/jazz tune in which *stop time* accents the melody, like a question and answer. Stop time is very common in blues, jazz, and other styles. To hear more stop time blues, listen to artists such as Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Jim Hall, Sarah Vaughn, Bill Evans, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Abbie Lincoln, Dizzy Gillespie, and Charlie Parker.

LESSON 29
TECHNIQUE/THEORY

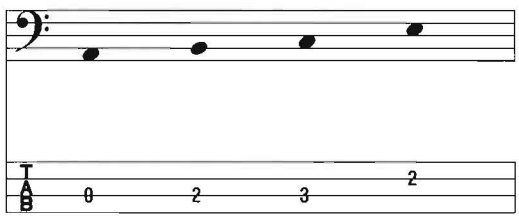
LISTEN 49 PLAY

Listen to "Stop It," and play along with the recording. Try to match the bass. At the head, the bass plays these two-note stop-time figures:

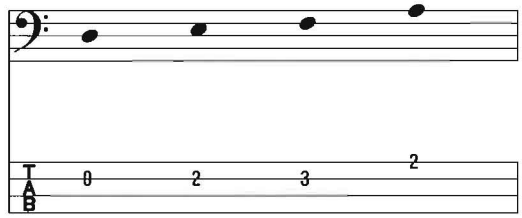


During the solo choruses, the bass walks.

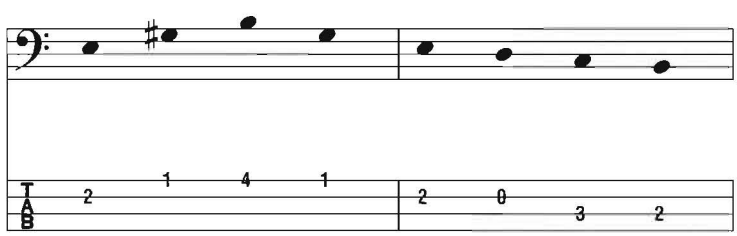
This is the first walking lick:



This is the second walking lick:



This is the third walking lick:



WALKING BASS: LINES THAT BREATHE

LISTEN 50 PLAY

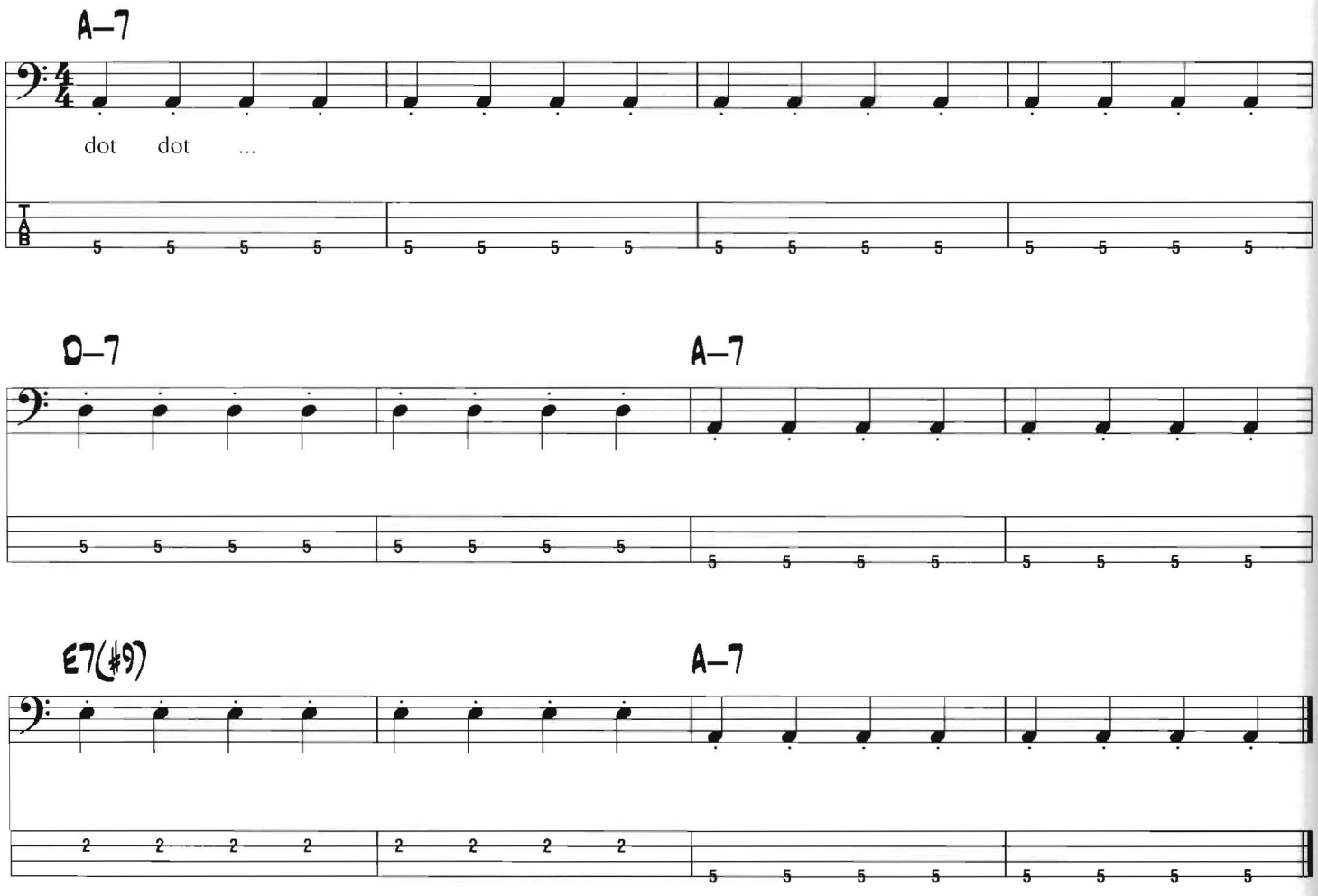
When you play swing, you want to create a danceable time feel. Your line should breathe. Here are a few things you can do to make your walking bass lines come alive.

1. Note length. Notes shouldn't be too short or too long, and they don't all have to be the same. Even though you are playing on every beat, the line and time needs to breathe, and have a sense of phrasing, or it will sound stiff.

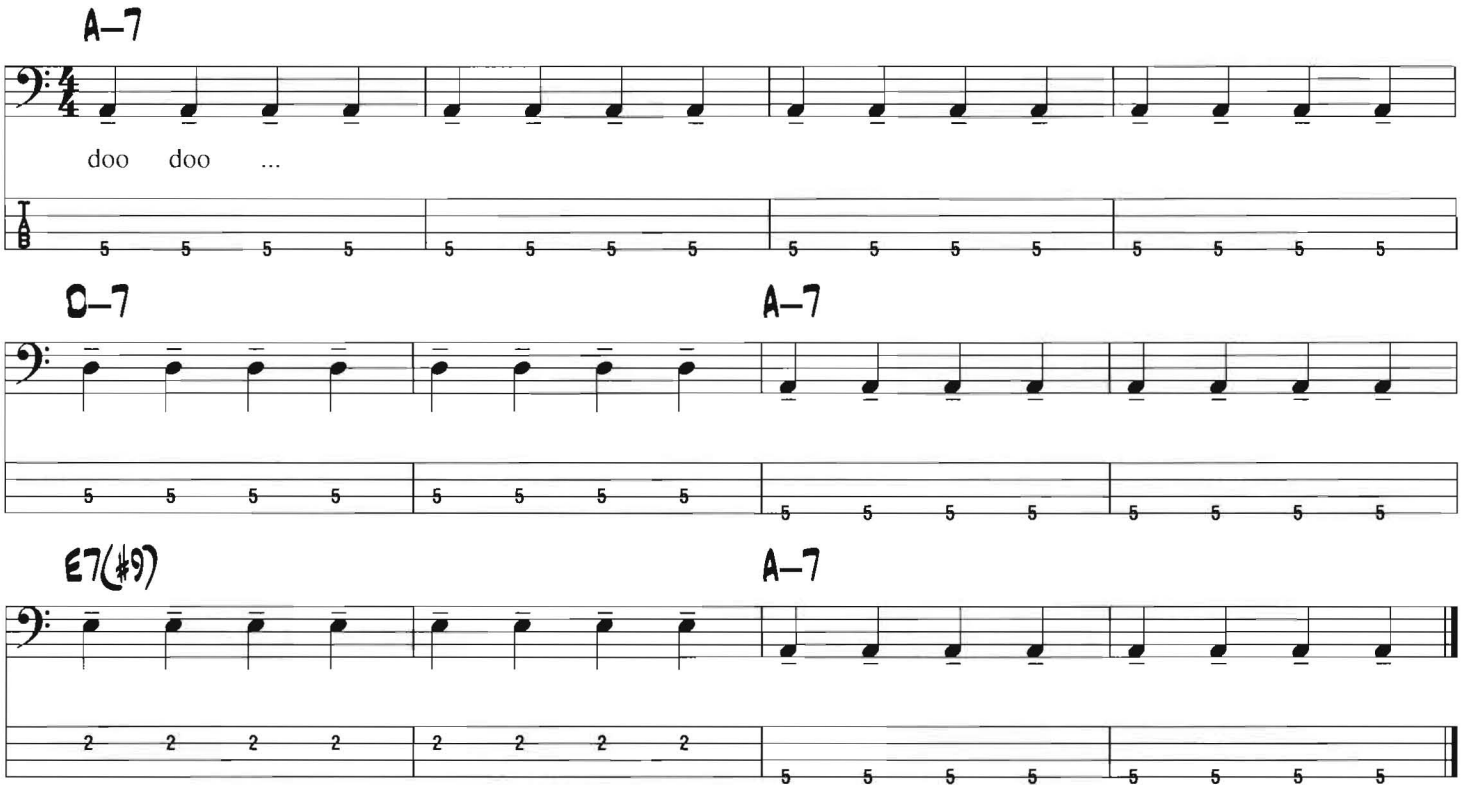
PRACTICE TIP

The way you breathe affects the way you play. Pay attention to how you breathe when you play, and match your articulations to your breath. Practice breathing short breaths when you play short notes and long breaths when you play long notes.

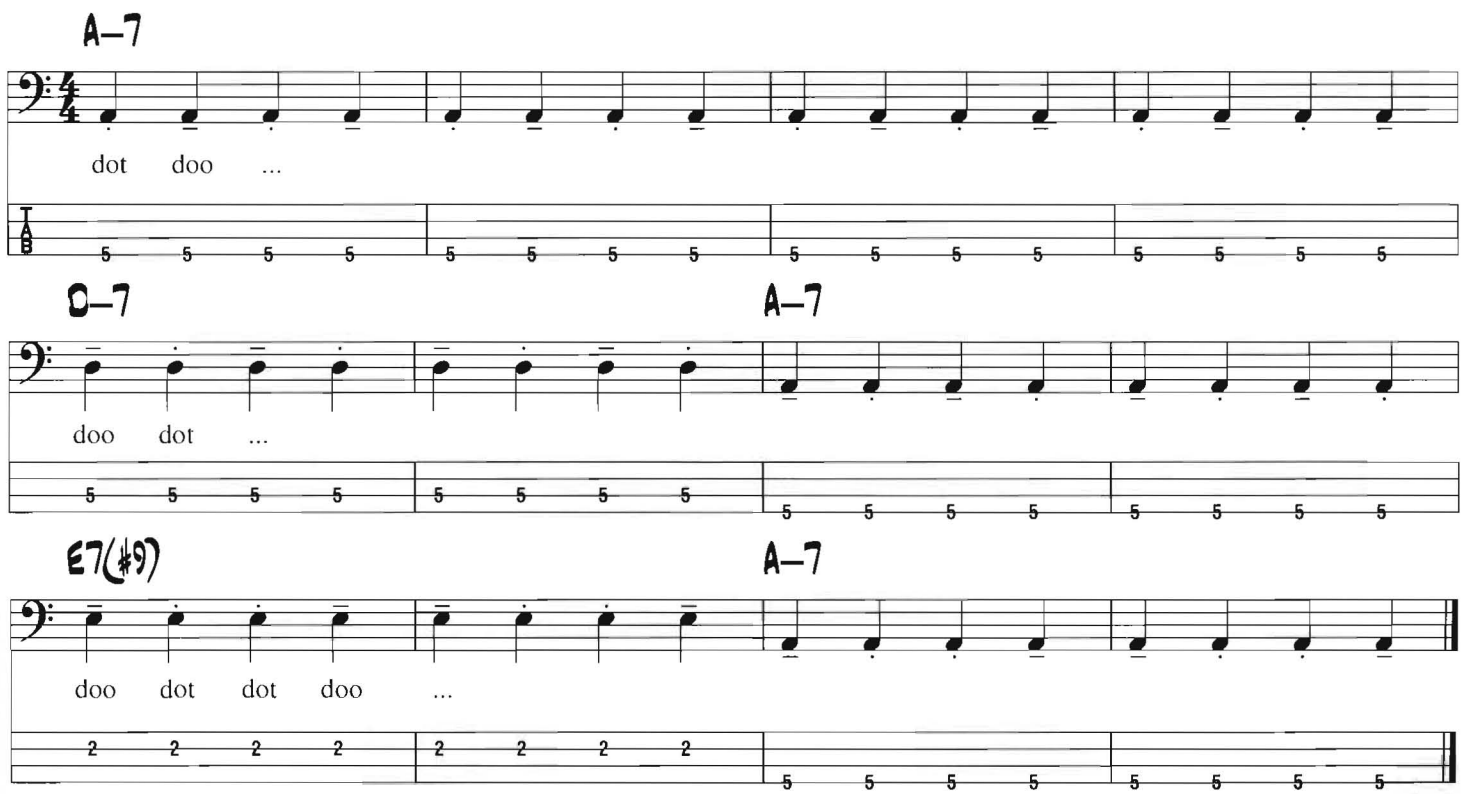
Older styles of swing tended to use short, percussive notes.



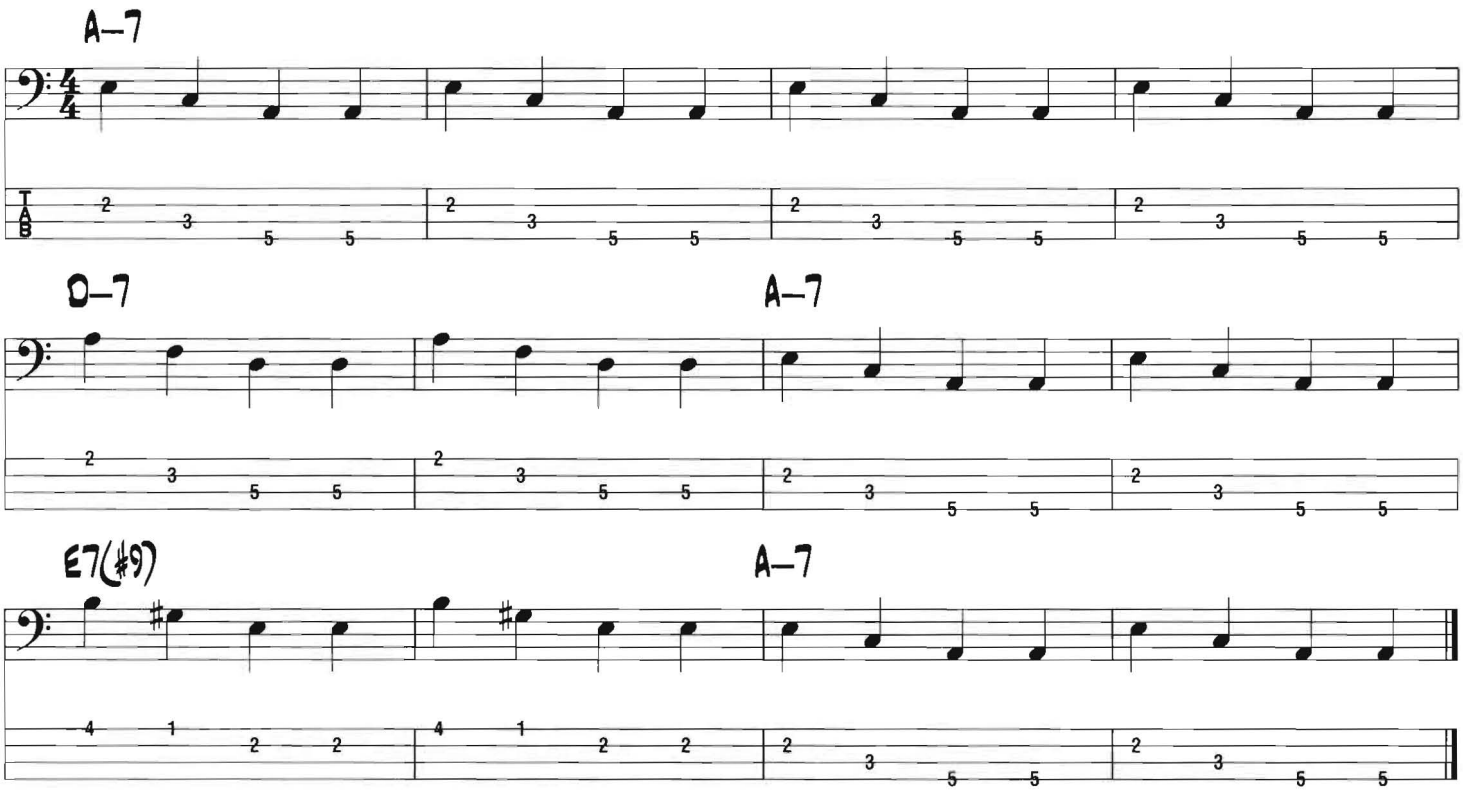
More modern swing tends to have longer notes.



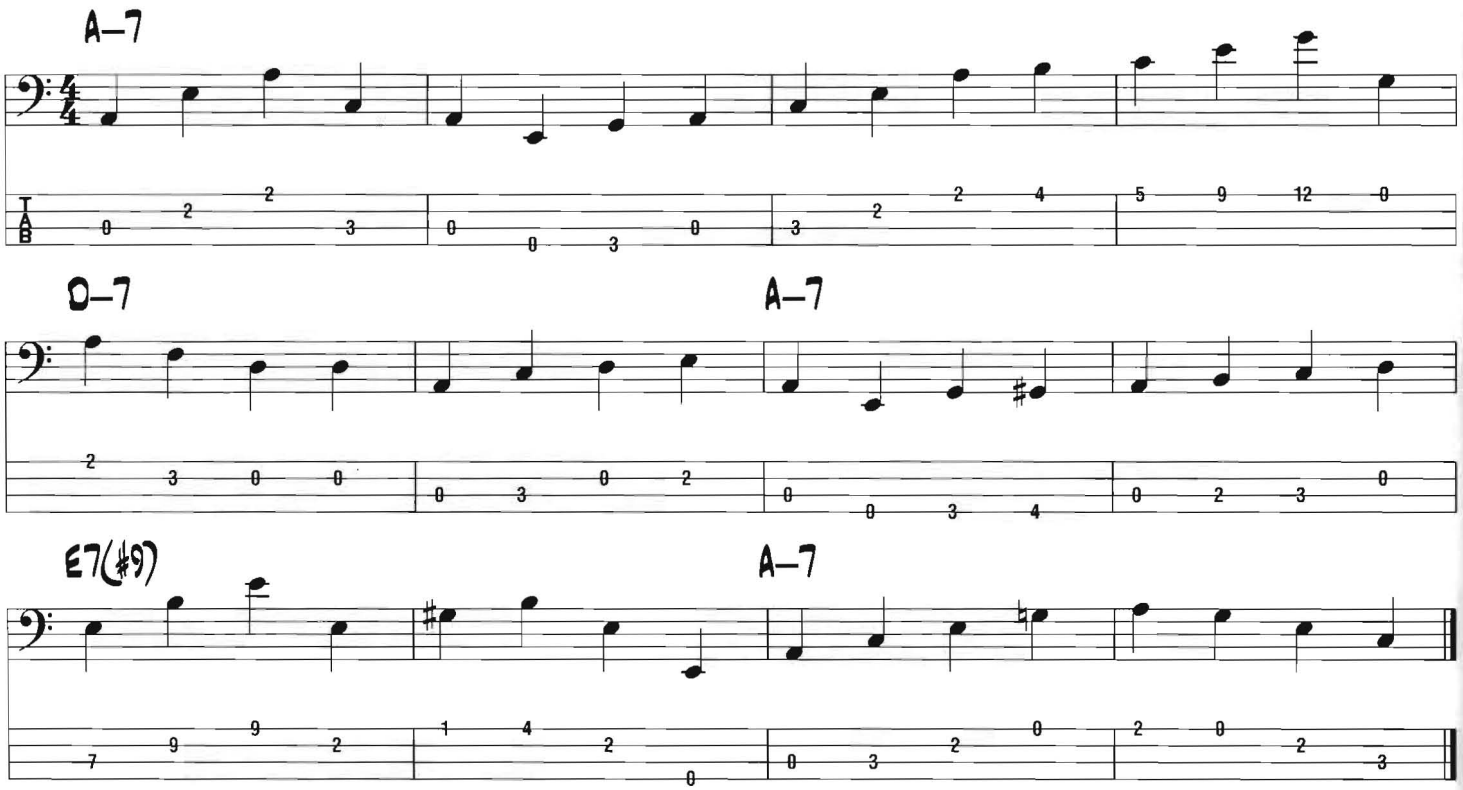
2. Note weight. Varying the weight of each note will also help your bass line breathe. The root on the first beat is usually heavy.



Roots are "heavier" than other chord tones. Try moving the root to beats other than the downbeat. In this example, the root is used on beats 3 and 4.



3. Range. Most walking lines are in the middle range of the instrument. Use high and low notes for variety. Similarly, chord tones are stable, and approach notes add variety.

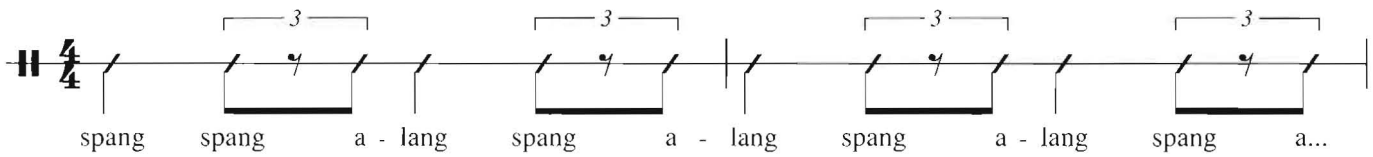


LESSON 30
LEARNING THE GROOVE

HOOKING UP TO STOP-TIME BLUES

LISTEN 49 PLAY

Listen to "Stop It." This jazz cymbal beat is at the heart of jazz rhythm. The "spang spang a-lang" cymbal beat is unique to jazz, and it has been its primary pattern since the 1940s. Its underlying pulse is the same as the shuffle. This pattern has accompanied Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Duke Ellington, and thousands of other jazz artists.



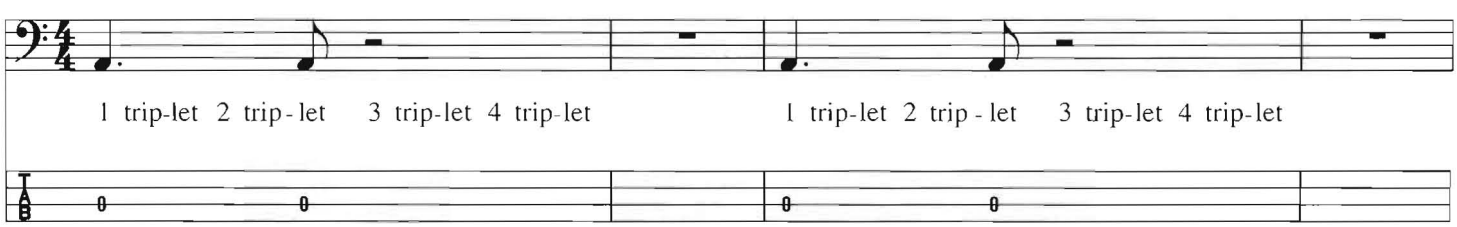
In stop time, the groove is interrupted by *stop-time kicks*. These are rhythmic figures, usually just one or two beats long, that punctuate the melody. That is why it is called "stop time"—the melody "stops" or rests. During the solos, the rhythm section *plays time*. This means playing a steady beat. The bass plays a regular walking line.

STOP TIME

The stop-time figure of "Stop It" is syncopated, breaking the sense of time even more. During the solos, when the rhythm section plays time, the sense of motion is increased because it sounds so different than the stop-time section.

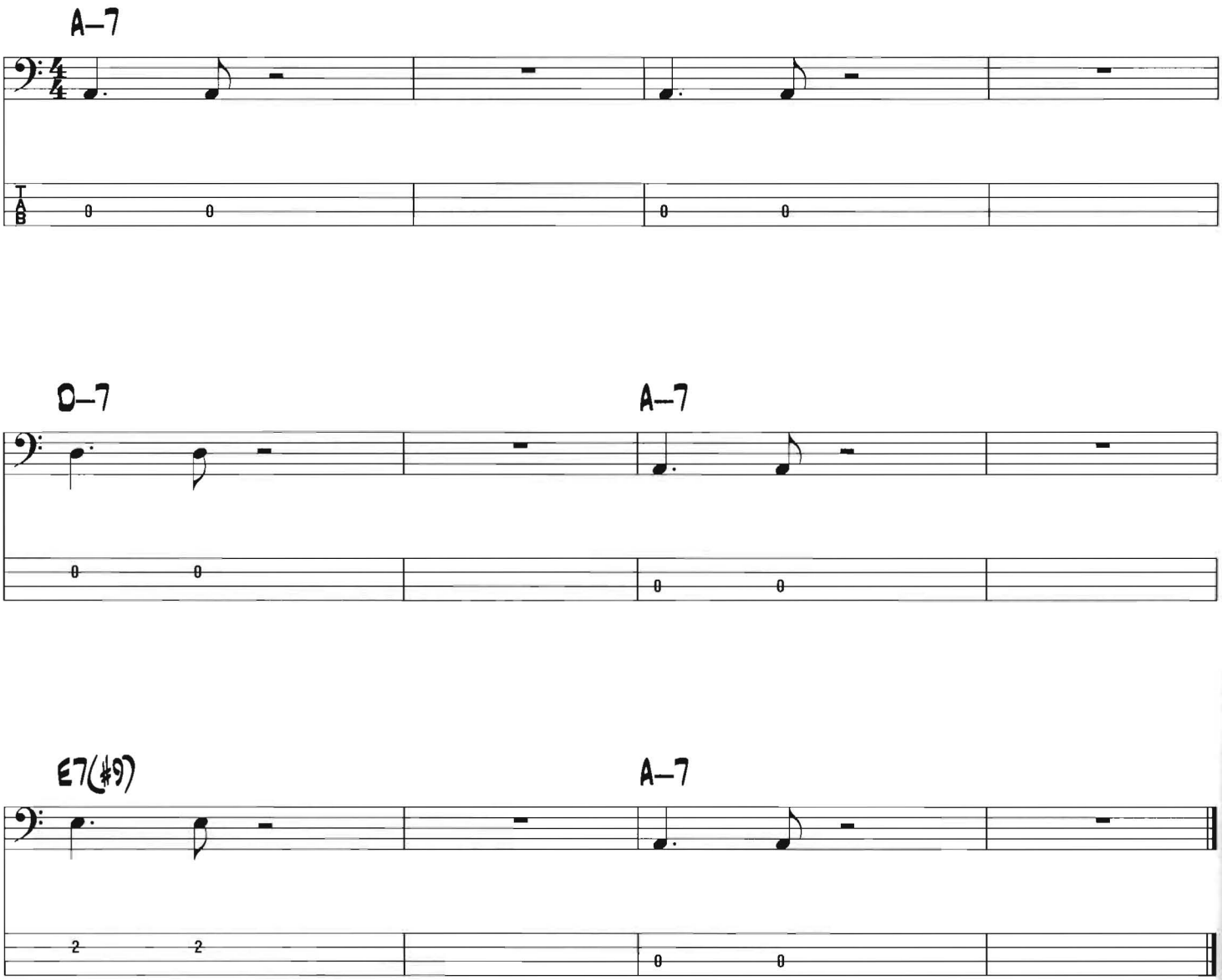
LISTEN 51 PLAY

Listen to the head of "Stop It" and count the swing eighth notes, "1 trip-let, 2 trip-let, 3 trip-let, 4 trip-let." Notice the syncopated stop-time figure. The syncopation comes on the "-let" of beat 2. The melody enters in the middle of the measure, and continues for a measure by itself. This helps hide the downbeat, and it creates suspense.



Play the stop-time figures along with "Stop It." Play each note exactly with the rest of the rhythm section.

LISTEN 52 PLAY



PLAYING TIME

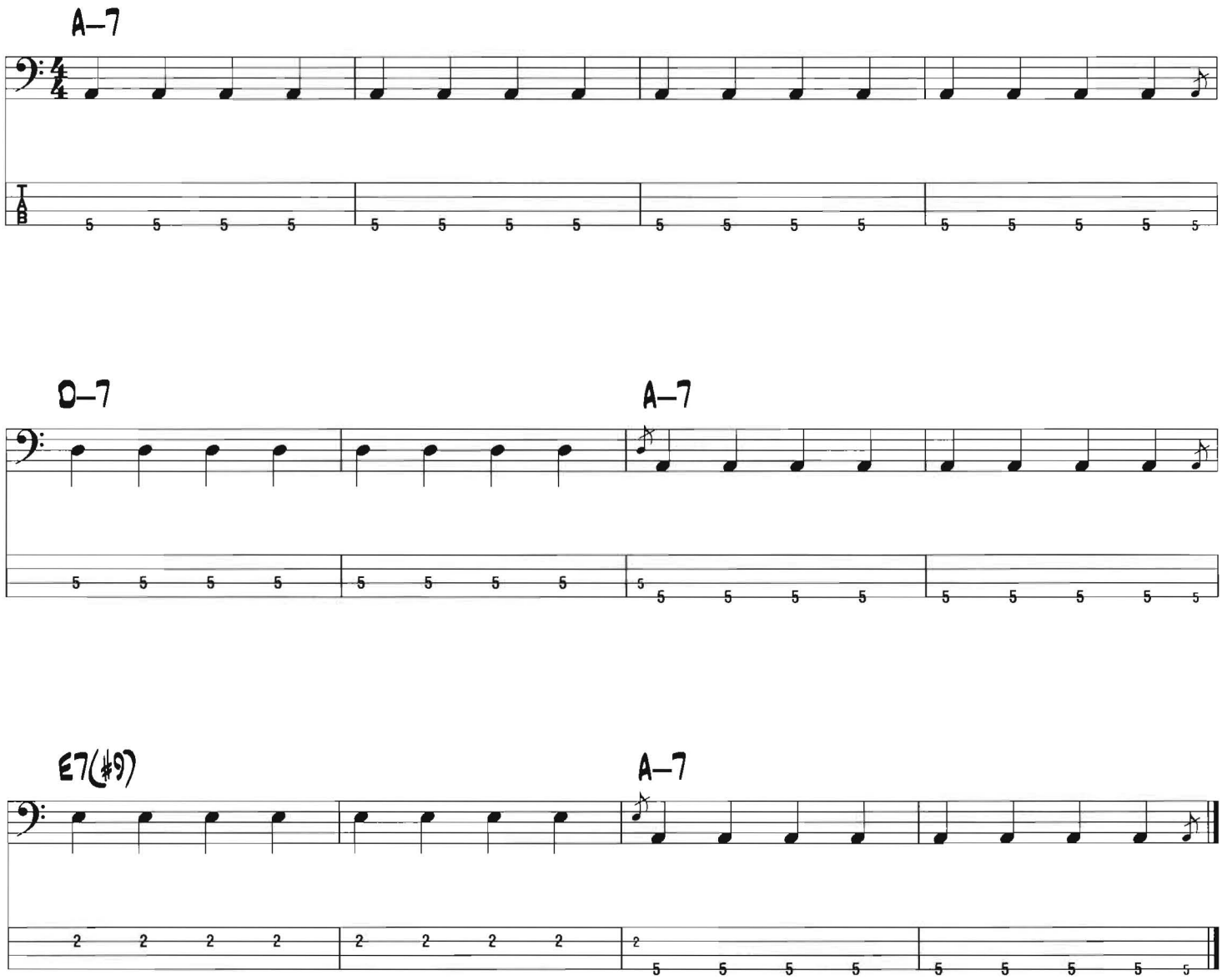
LISTEN 53 PLAY

Listen to the second part of "Stop It." Notice how different it feels when the rhythm section plays regular time after a stop-time chorus.

In the early swing era, walking bass lines had more repeated notes. Play "Stop It" along with the recording. When the band goes into regular time, play just the repeated chord roots. Playing four quarter notes in each bar may seem simple, but you must place the notes precisely with the drums, and feel the time of the whole group.

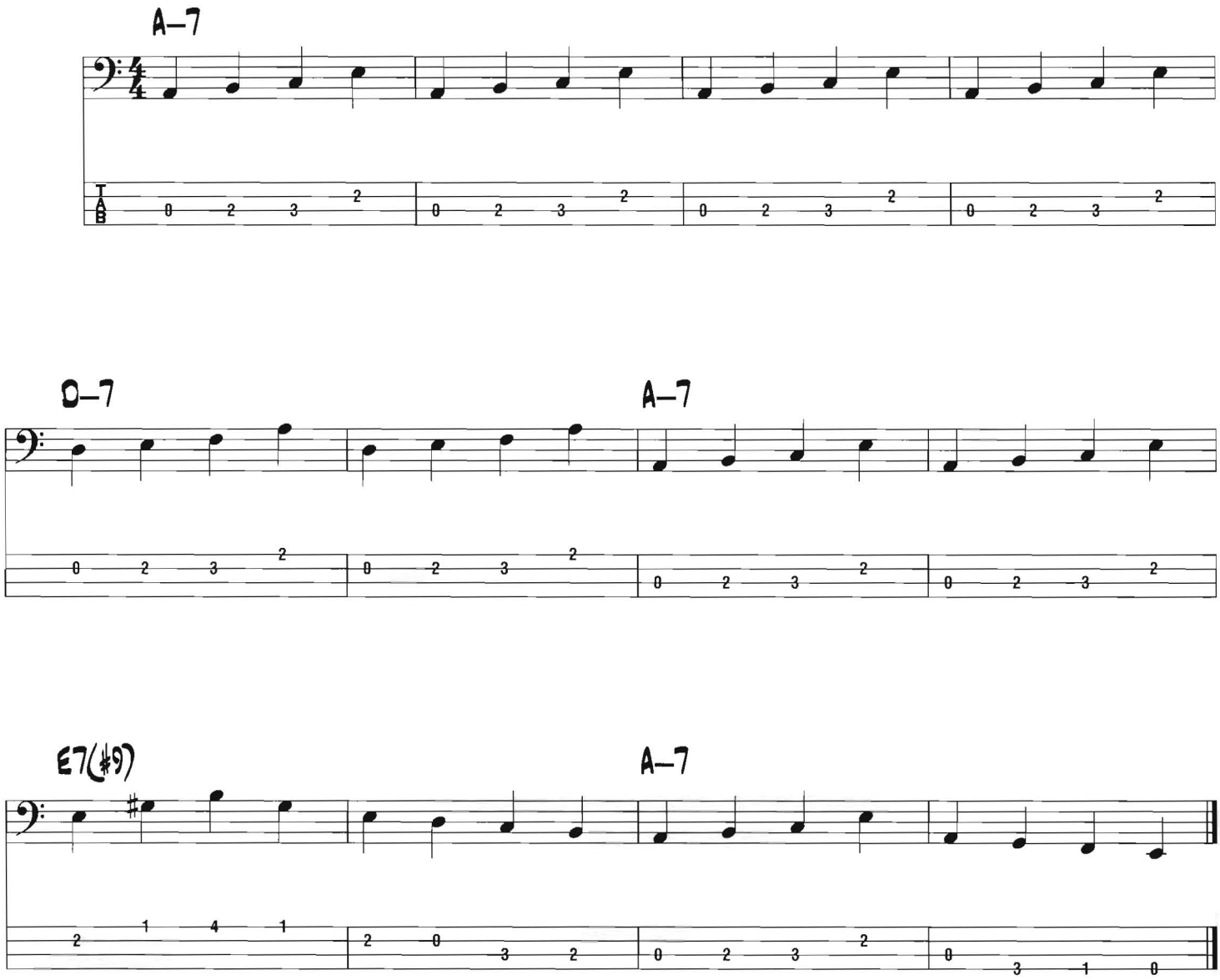
The skips before each chord change give the line a little movement. You can play the notes shown or a dead note on these skips. (In this example, skips are indicated using small *grace notes.* Grace notes are a common way of notating skips.)

LISTEN 54 PLAY



More modern bass lines have more of a sense of shape, and use few repeated notes. Practice this bass line with the recording.

LISTEN 50 PLAY



PRACTICE TIP

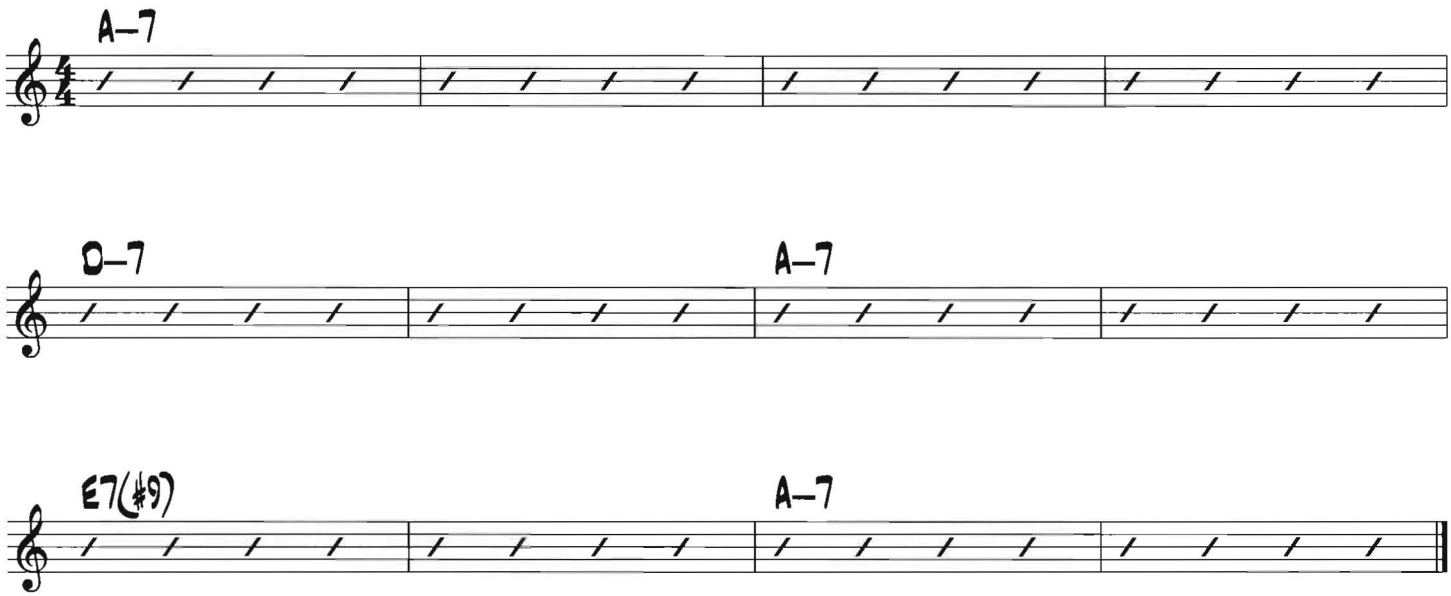
Listen to the drummer. Hook up with the ride cymbal. Notice the accented rim shot on beat 4. During drum fills and kicks, hold back so that you don't get in the drummer's way.

LESSON 31
IMPROVISATION

FORM AND ARRANGEMENT

Listen to "Stop It" and try to figure out the form and arrangement by ear. Then continue with this chapter.

LISTEN 49 PLAY

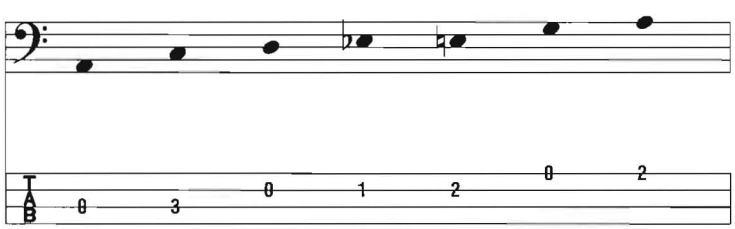


"Stop It" is a 12-bar blues. There are two choruses of melody, which are in stop time. There are four choruses of solo, which are in regular time. It ends with two choruses of stop-time melody, and a final one-bar ending.

IDEAS FOR IMPROVISING BASS LINES

SCALE

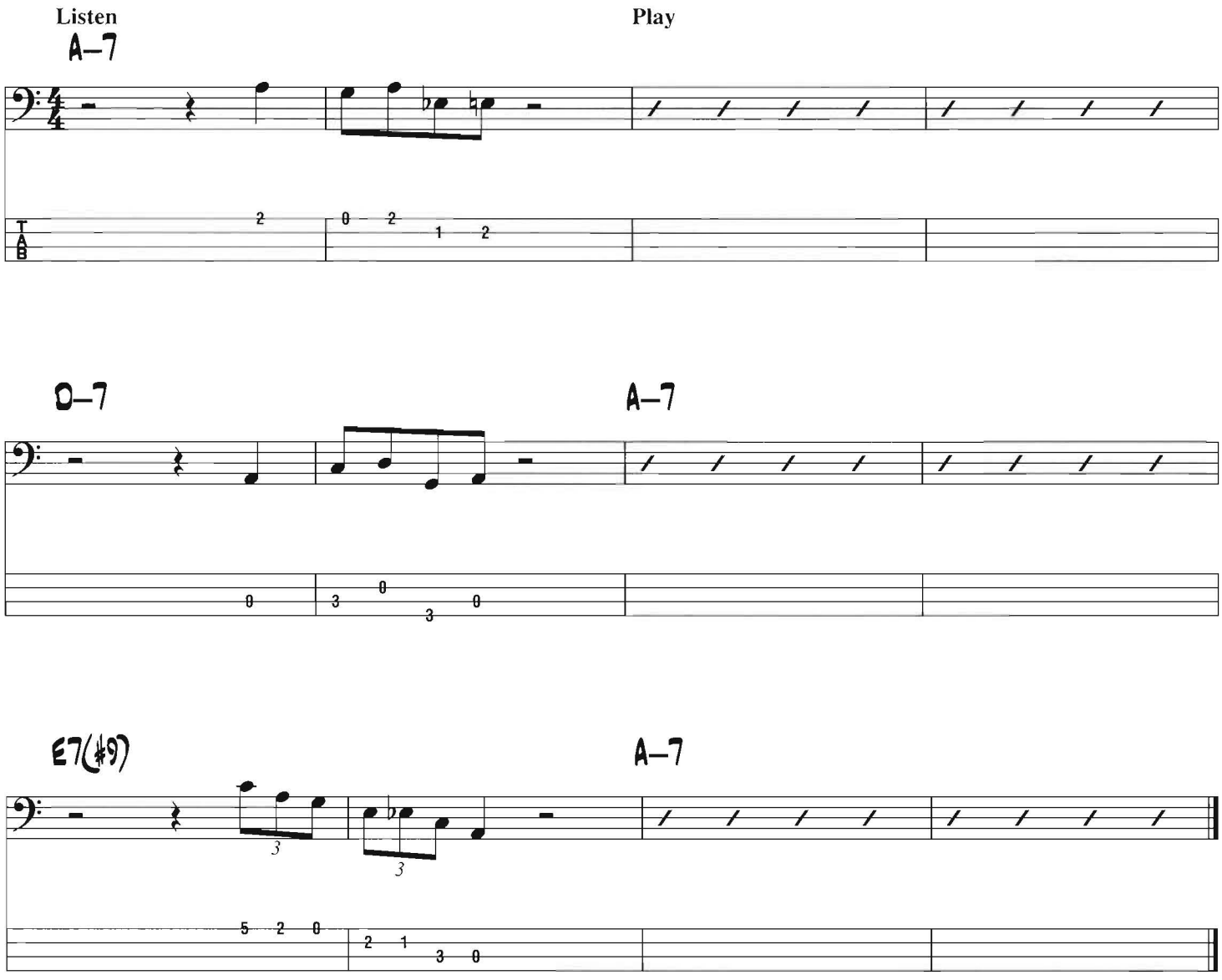
In this tune, improvise using notes of the A blues scale.



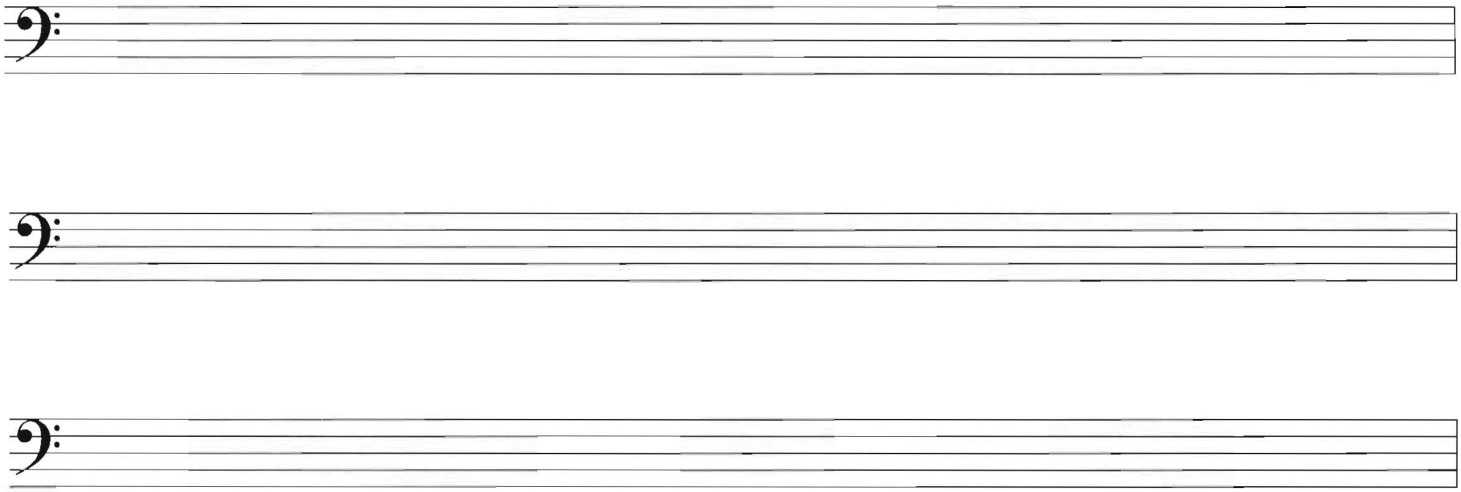
CALL AND RESPONSE

1. Echo each phrase, exactly as you hear it.
2. Improvise an answer to each phrase. Imitate the sound and rhythmic feel of the phrase you hear, and use the notes from the A blues scale.

LISTEN 55 PLAY

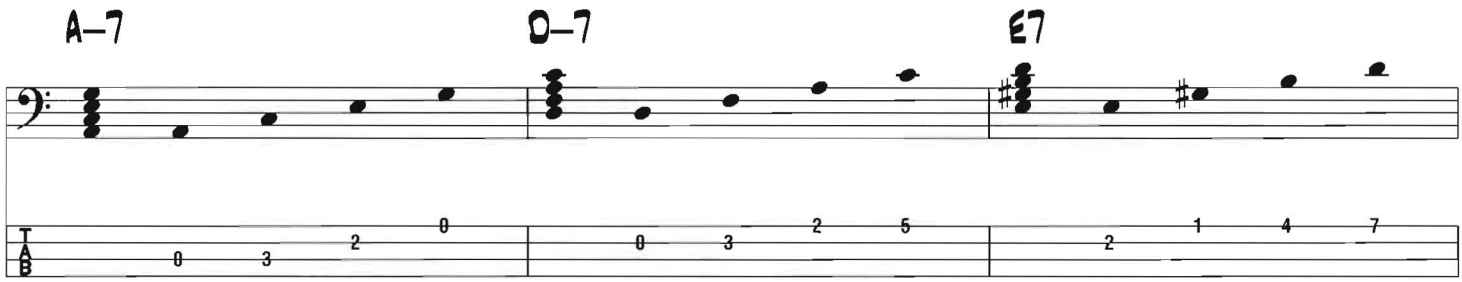


Write out a few of your own ideas for a walking bass line, using any of the techniques you have learned.

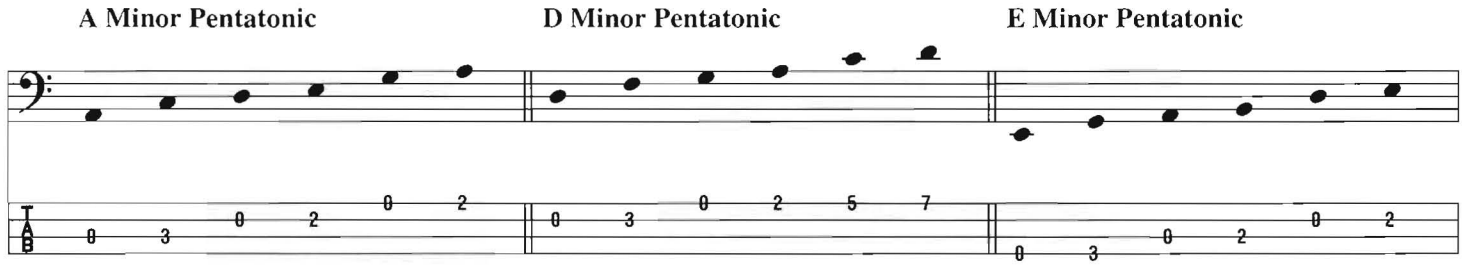


PLANNING YOUR LINE

Before you improvise, look at the song form and plan your line. Your target notes are on every chord change. Here are the chord tones for the "Stop It" chords:

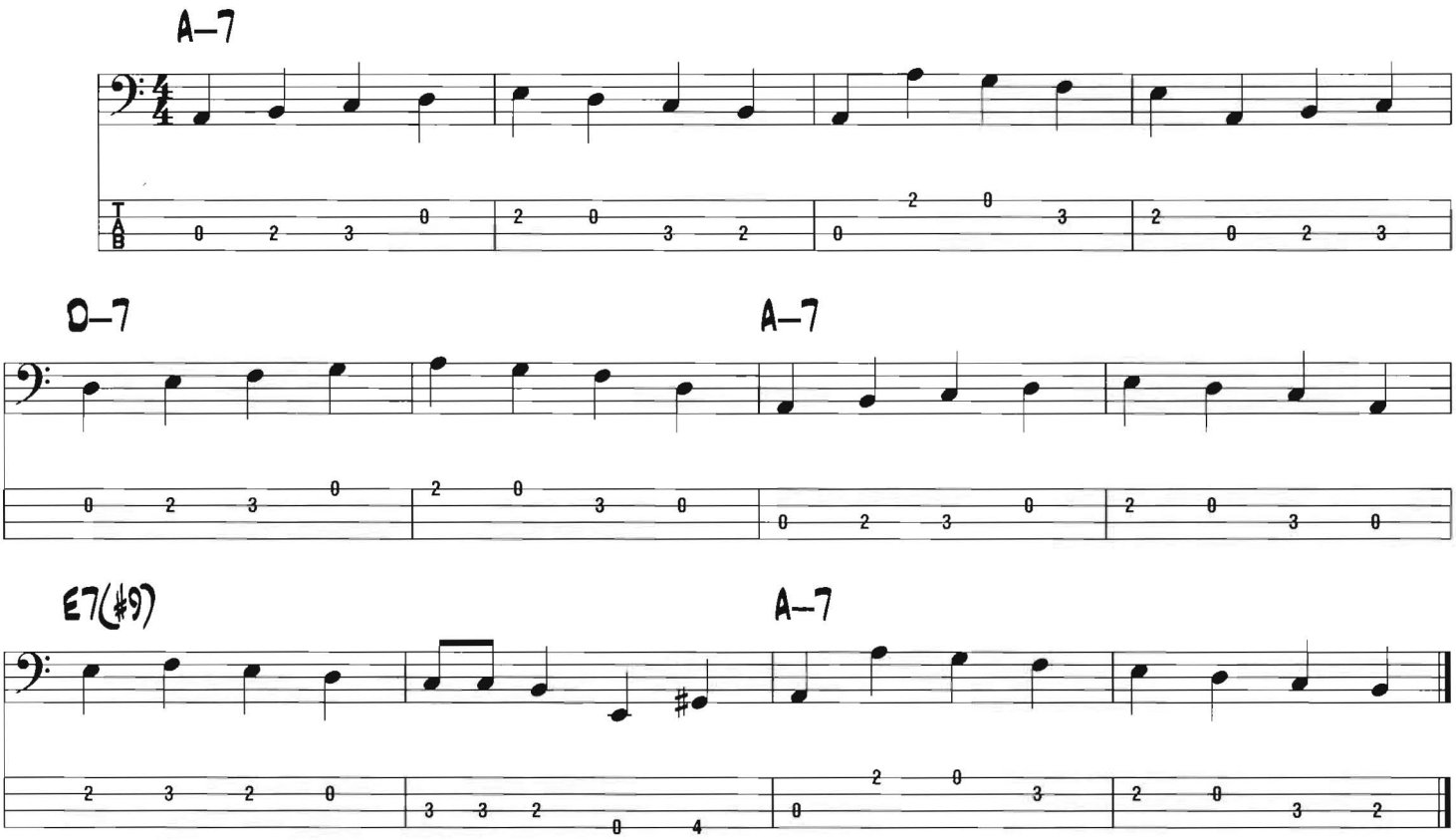


The chord tones are approached by step, using notes from the tune's scales. In this tune, you can use minor pentatonic scales based on the tune's chord roots: A, D, and E.

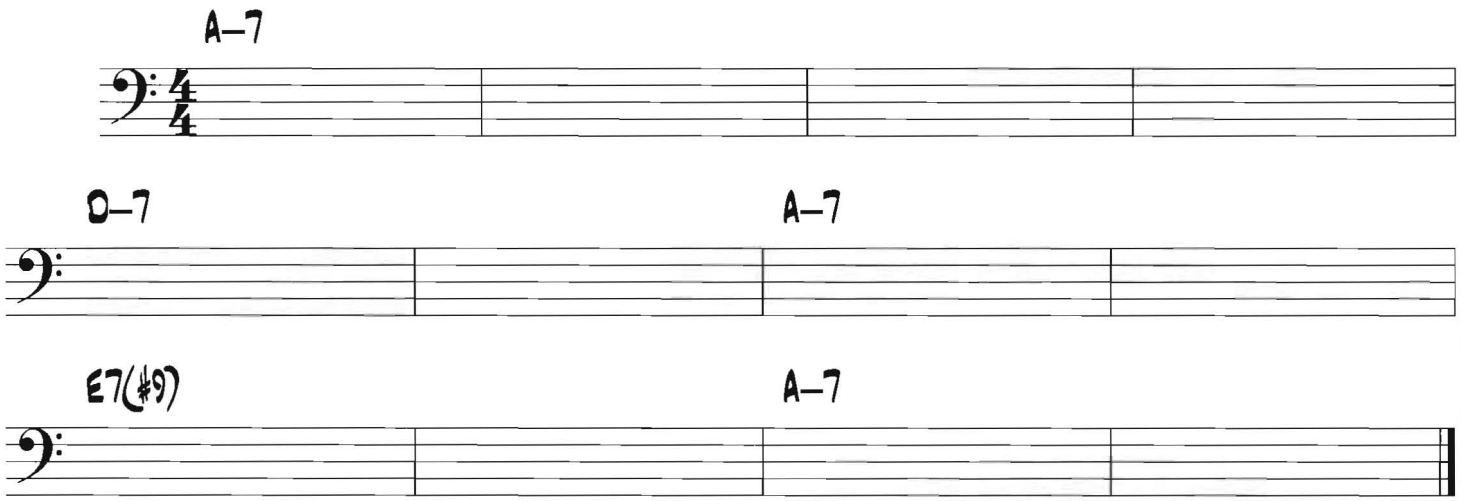


Map out the target notes for the line, and decide how you will approach them (by step) using the scale tones. Then, create your line, using chord tones, scale tones, and passing tones. The line for this tune can be very active. A walking line will have a strong sense of motion when it follows a stop-time section.

Practice this line. Notice the target notes and the approach notes. Did they come from scales? chords?



Now, create your own walking bass line to "Stop It."



LISTEN 50 PLAY

Once you have created your walking bass line, play it along with the recording. While you are playing it, improvise a small change to your line on every chorus, using skips, approach notes, and the other techniques you have been learning.

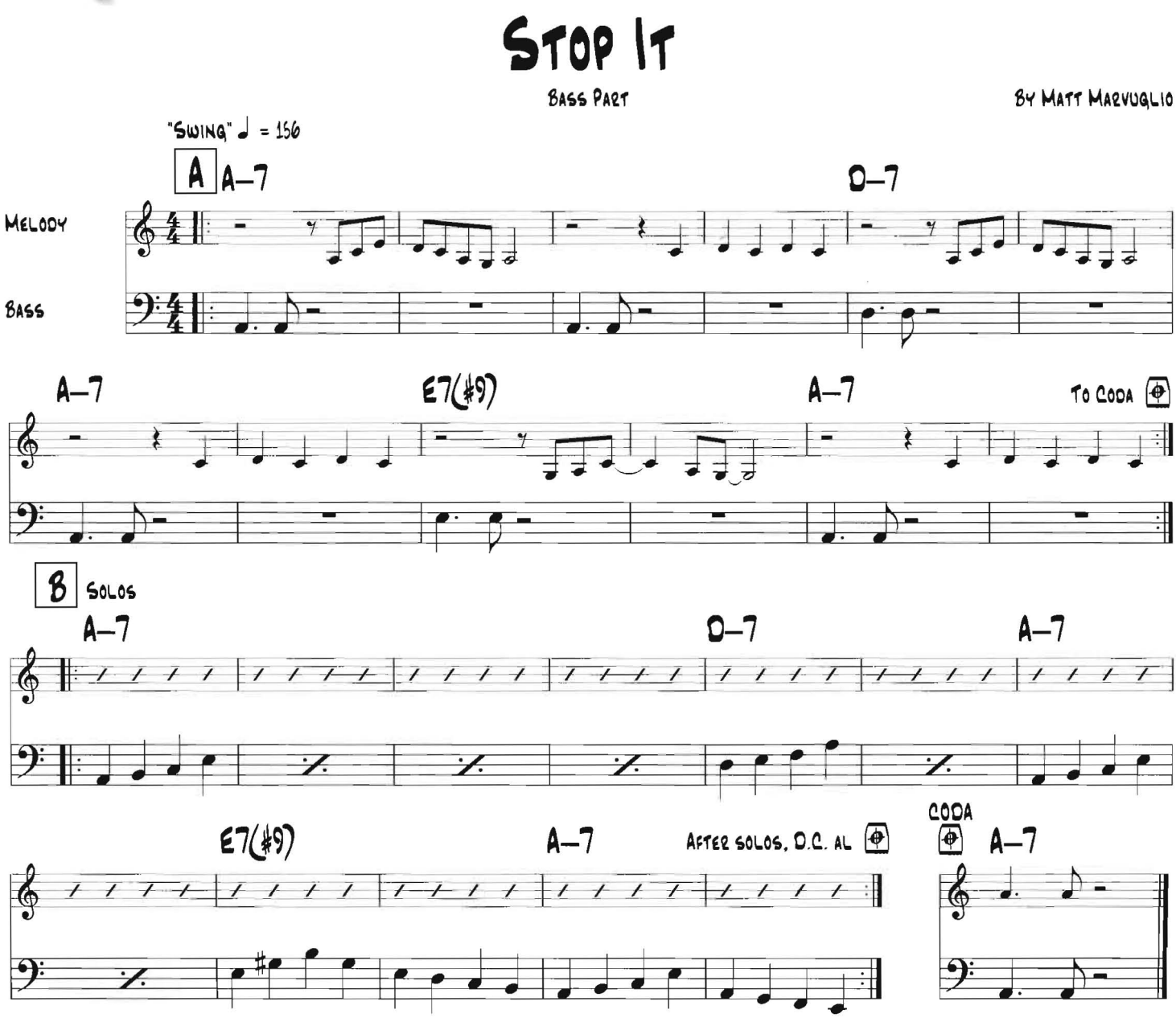
LESSON 32
READING

BASS PART

Play "Stop It" along with the recording, and read from the written bass part.

D.C. AL ⊕ From the beginning, and take the coda. Jump to the very first measure of the tune, and play from there. When you reach the first coda symbol, skip ahead to the next coda symbol (at the end). This is similar to the "D.S. al Coda," but instead of going to a sign, go to the first measure of the tune.

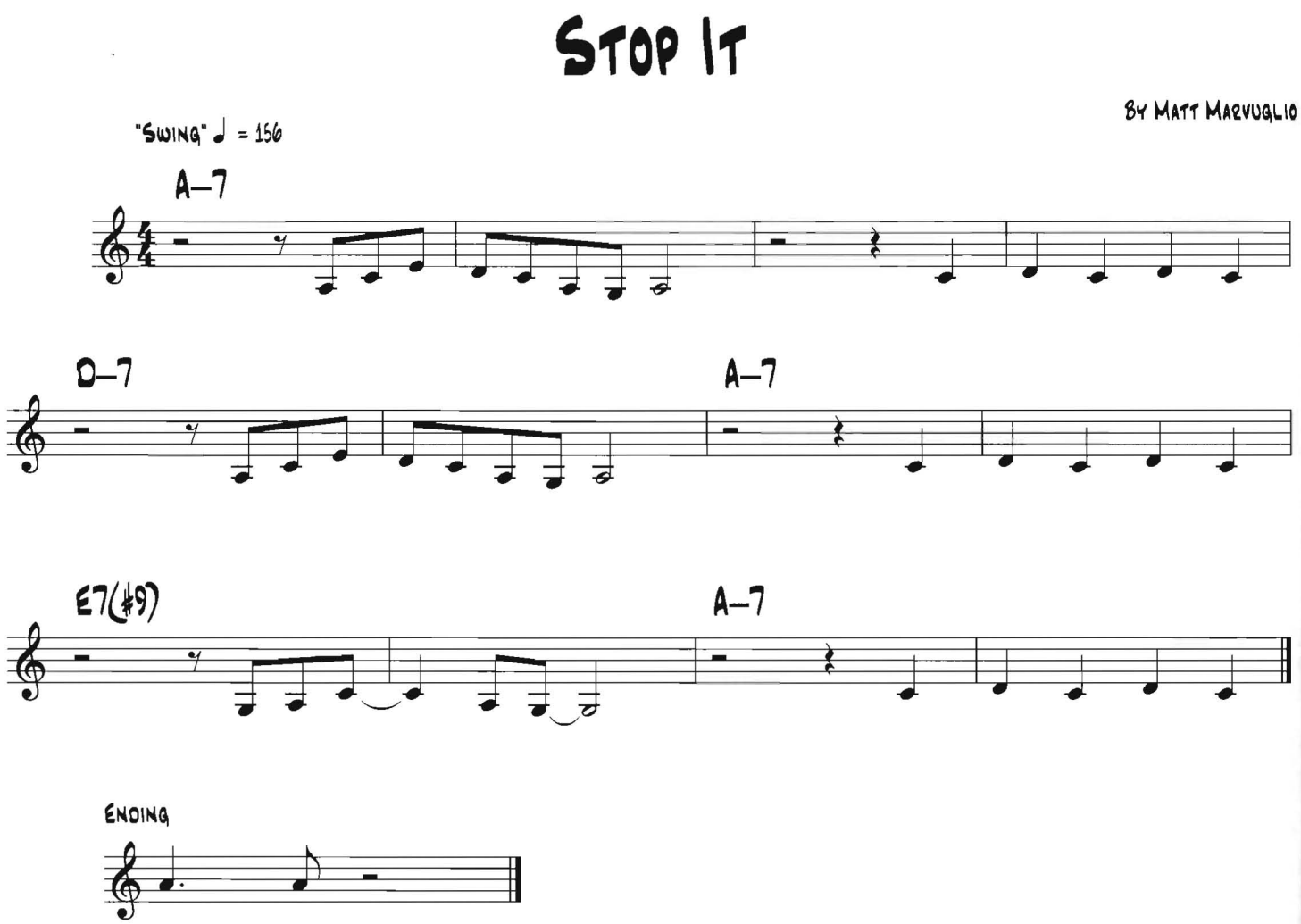
LISTEN 54 PLAY



LEAD SHEET

Play "Stop It" from the lead sheet. Use your own walking bass line.

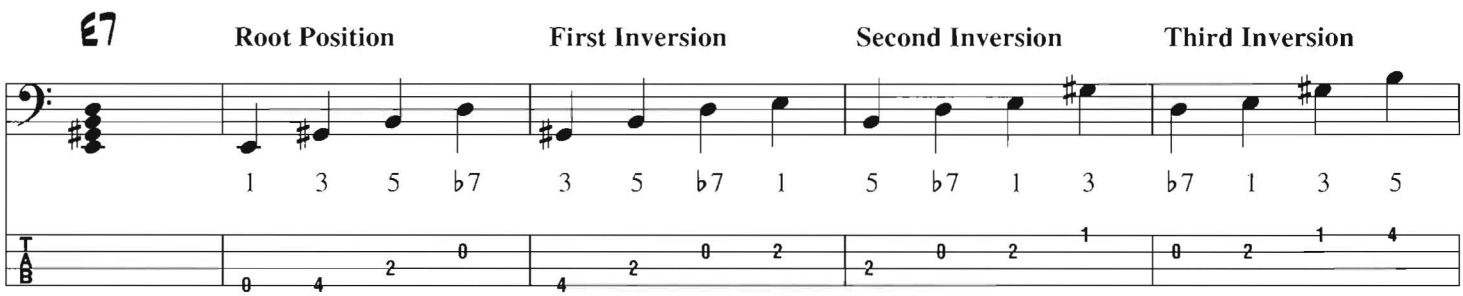
LISTEN 54 PLAY

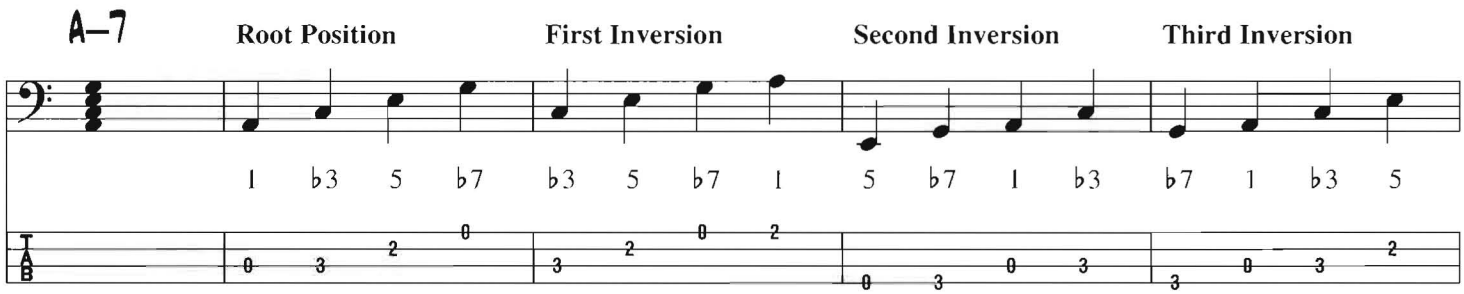


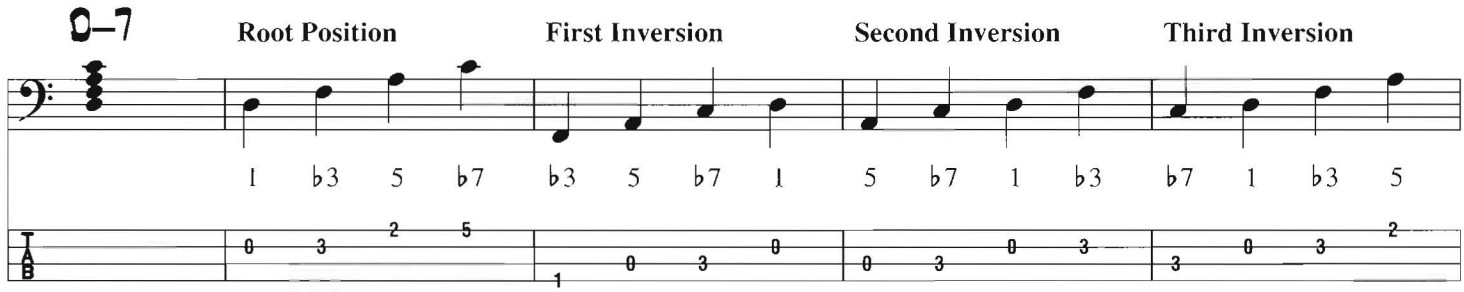
CHAPTER VIII
DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE

TECHNIQUE: INVERSIONS

Practice these inversions:



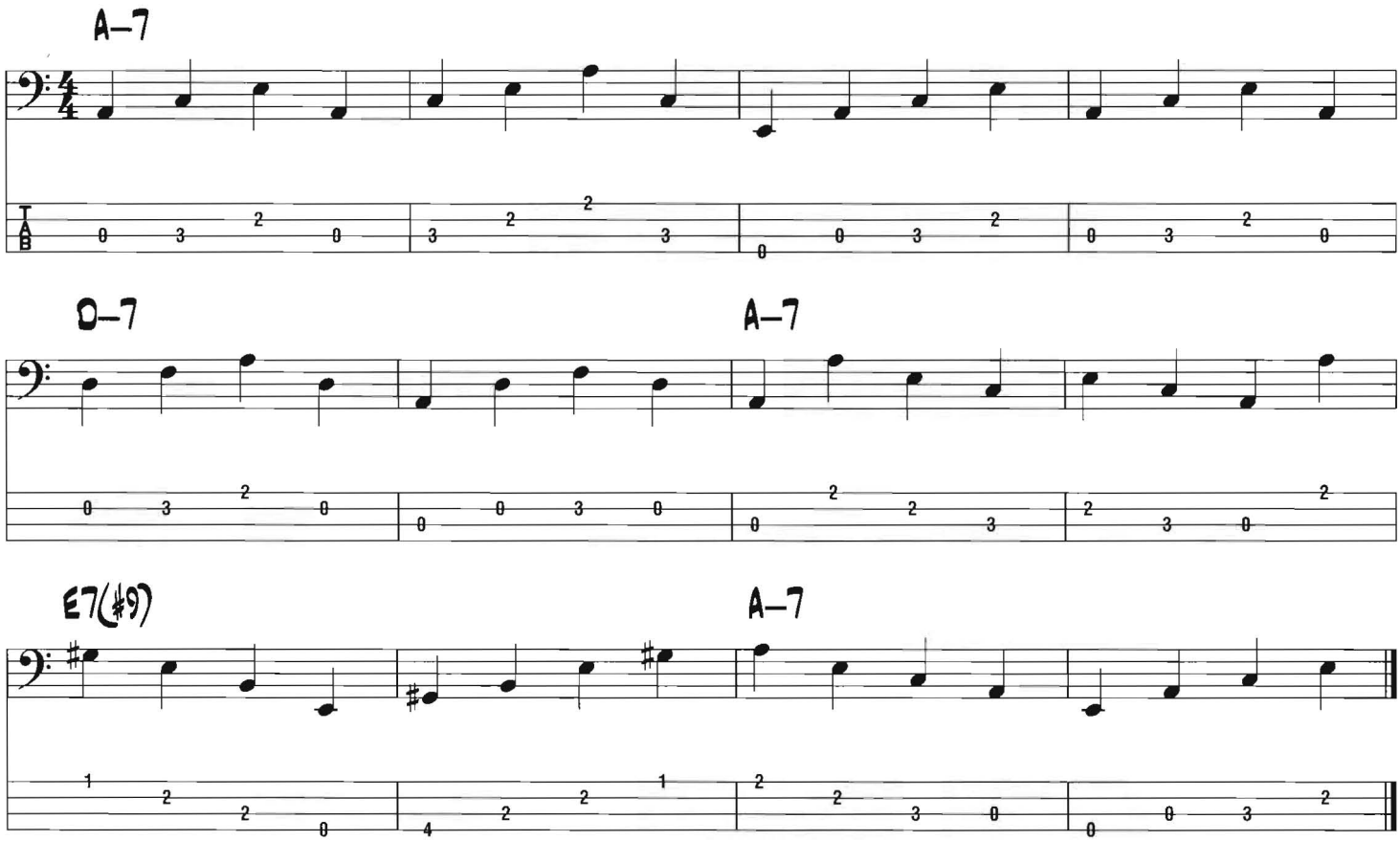




Inversions

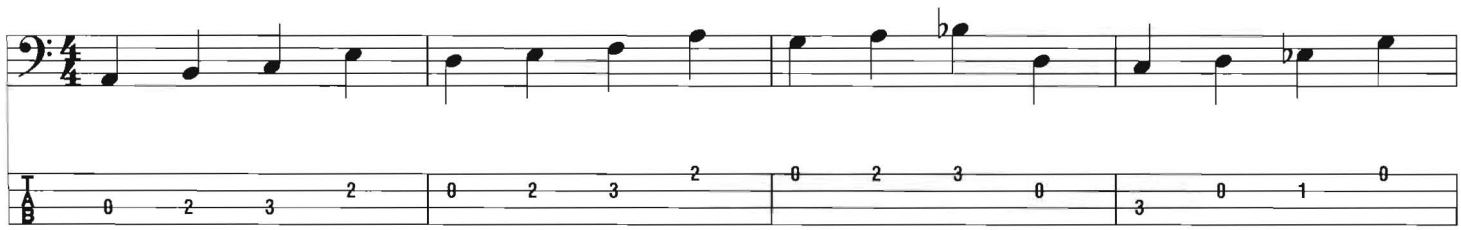
This walking bass line uses many inversions. Practice it along with the recording.

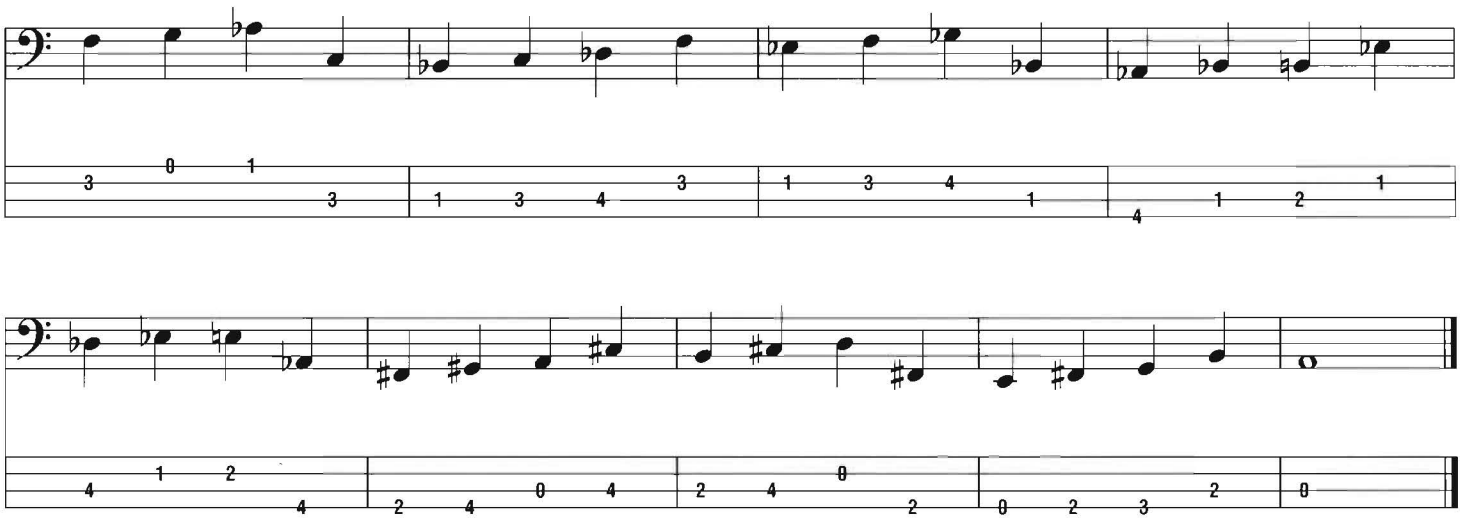
LISTEN 50 PLAY



TRANSPOSING RIFFS

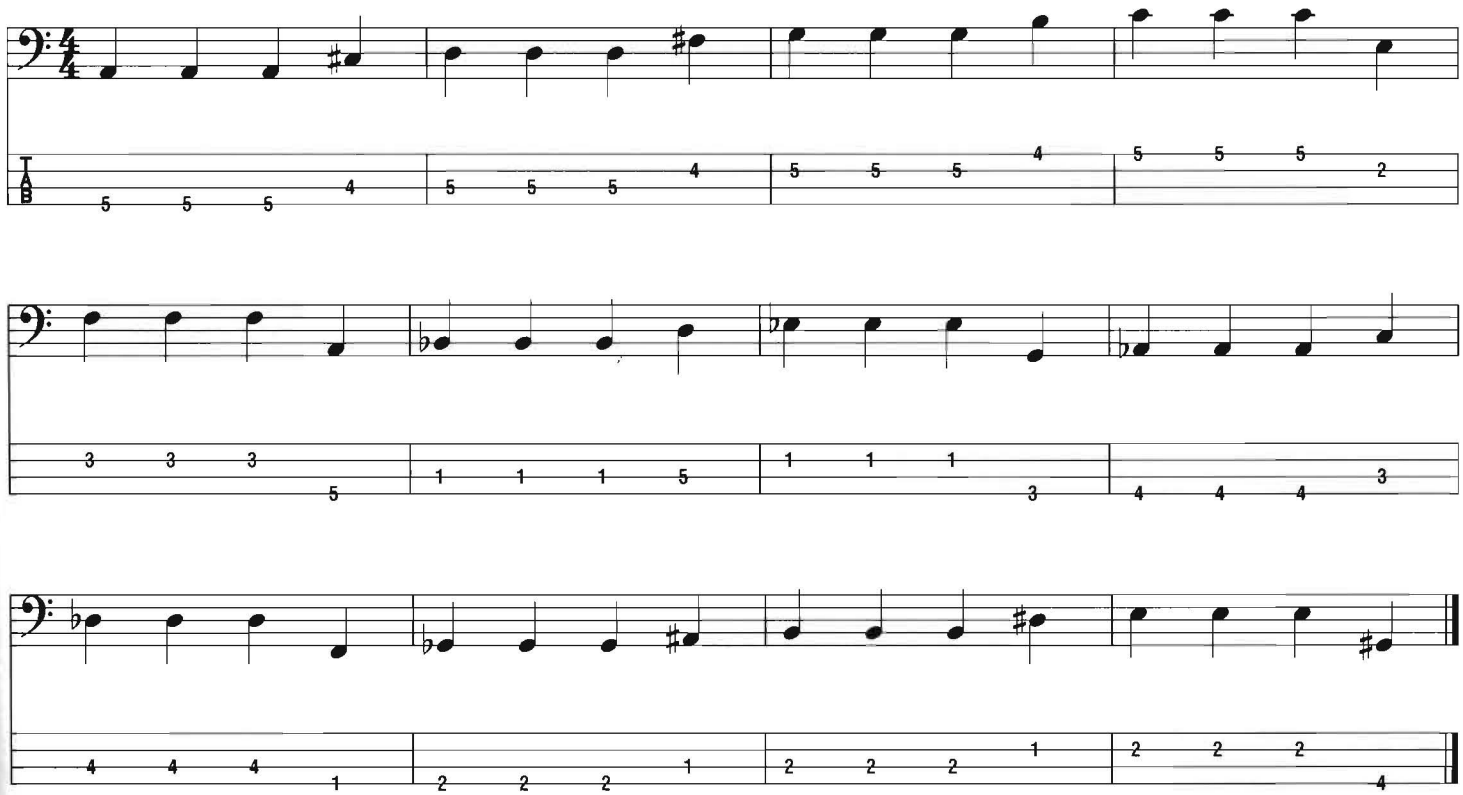
Practice this exercise. Use any available open strings.





APPROACH TONE PRACTICE

Approach tones will work well in bass lines to this tune, just like they would in "I Just Wanna Be with You."

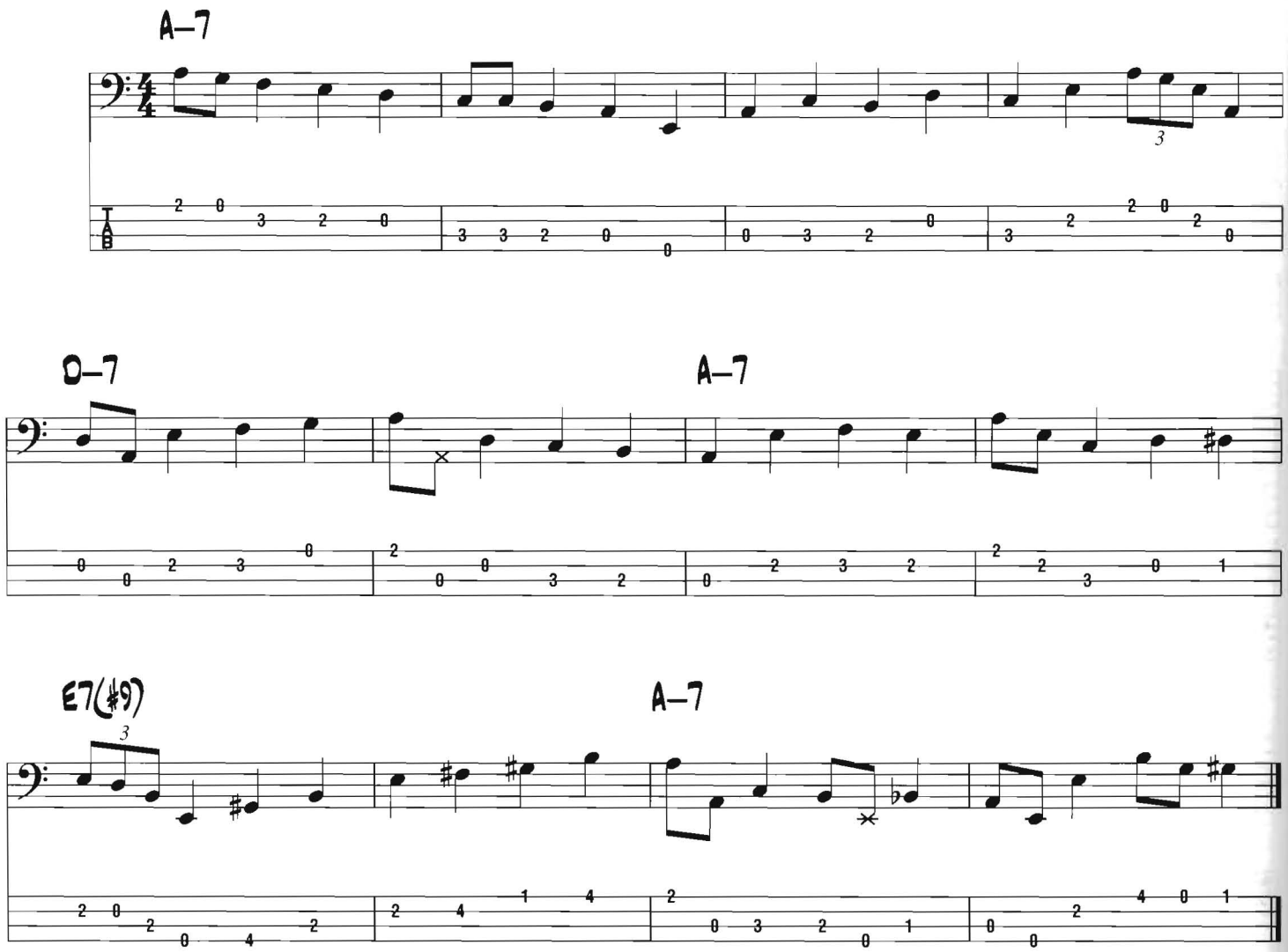


SKIP PRACTICE

You have seen how skips can make a walking line more interesting. Skips can appear on any beat, not just the last beat. You can also play triplets on any beat. Open-string notes are good choices to use in these triplets, as they can be played quickly.

Practice this bass line, and then play it along with the recording. Practice it slowly at first. Notice the shape of the line.

LISTEN 50 PLAY



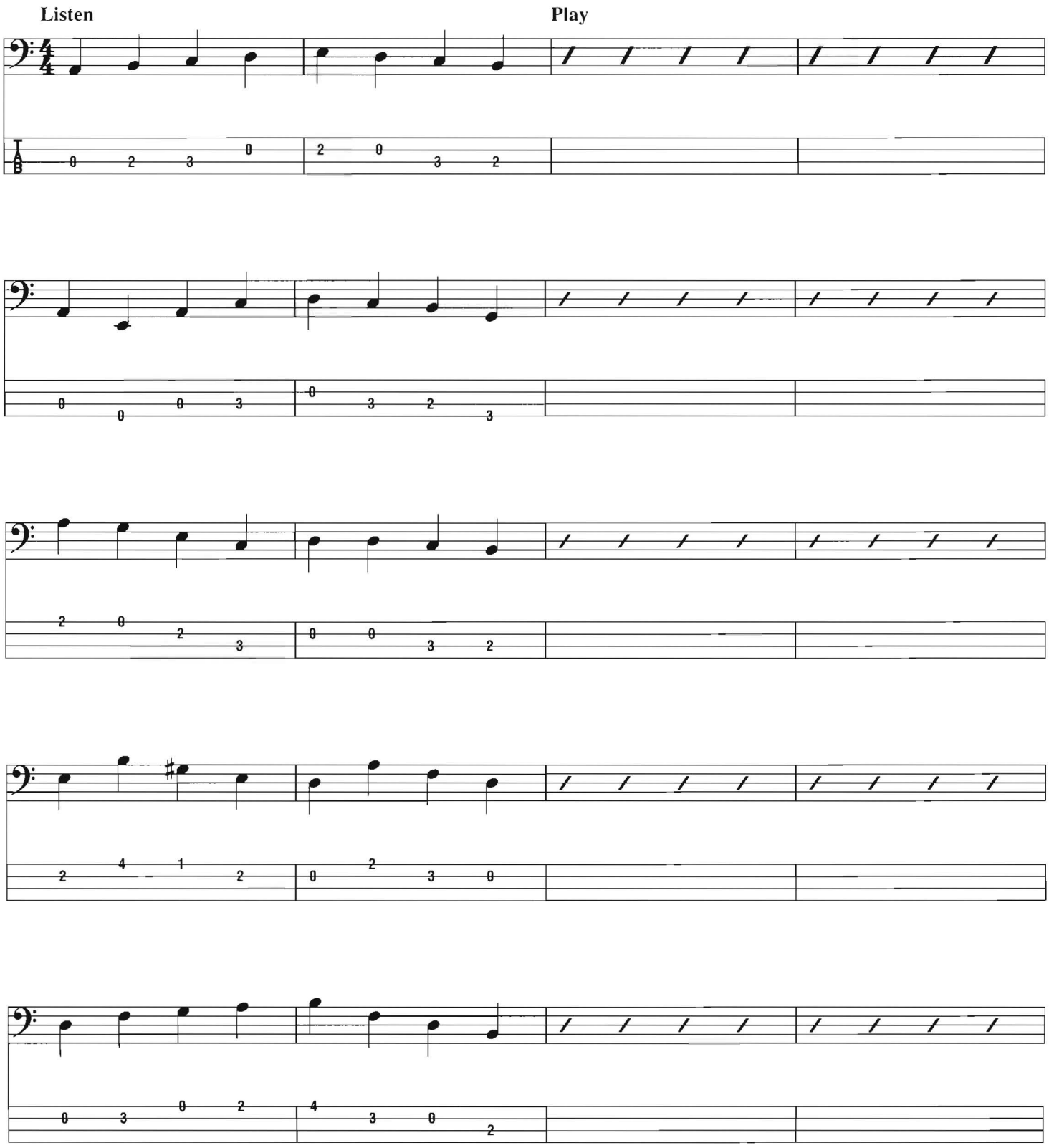
CHALLENGE

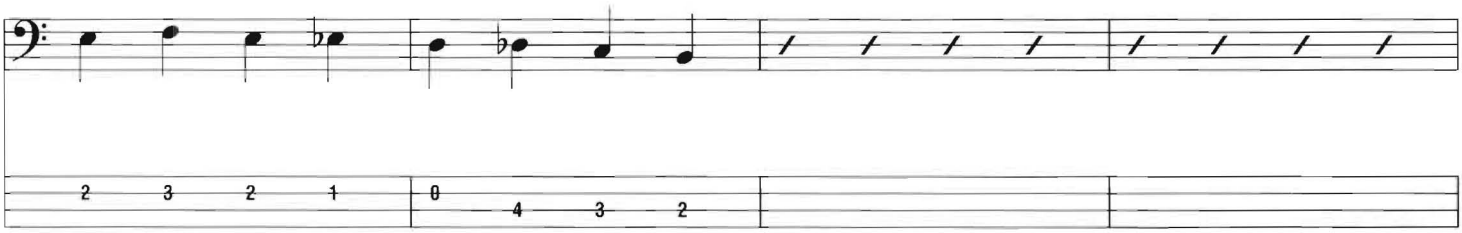
Create your own bass line, using one triplet-feel figure—a skip or a triplet—in every measure.

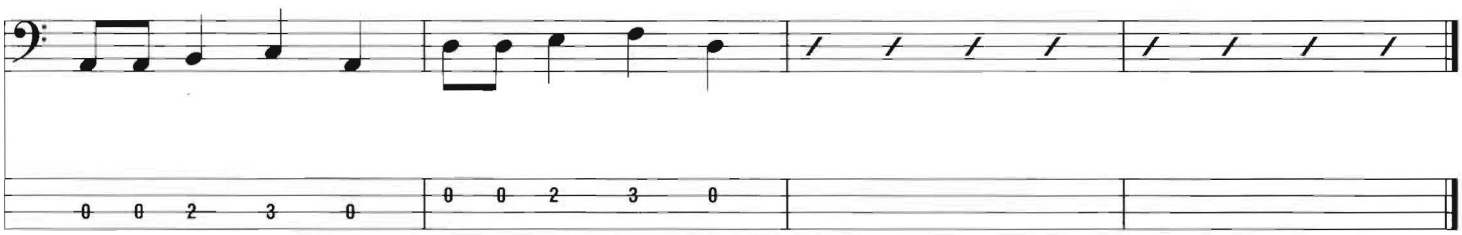
CALL AND RESPONSE: LICKS

Listen to the recording and repeat each lick. You can use these licks in your own bass line.

LISTEN 56 PLAY







MEMORIZE

LISTEN **49** PLAY

Create a new bass line and solo to "Stop It." Practice it along with the recording, and memorize it.

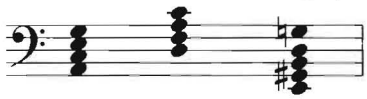
SUMMARY

FORM
12-BAR BLUES
(1 CHORUS = 12 BARS)

ARRANGEMENT
2 CHORUS MELODY
4 CHORUS SOLO
2 CHORUS MELODY
END: 1 M.

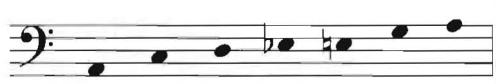
HARMONY

A–7 D–7 E7(♯9)



SCALE

A BLUES SCALE



PLAY "STOP IT" WITH YOUR OWN BAND!

FINAL REMARKS

Congratulations on completing the *Berklee Practice Method.* You now have a good idea of the role of the bassist in the band, and have command of the eight grooves and time feels of these tunes. The bass lines and the harmonic progressions that you have learned are important and useful parts of your musical vocabulary. In addition, you have tools and ideas for creating your own bass lines and solos. This is a great start!

What to do next? Play along with your favorite recordings. Find records that you hear other musicians talking about. Learn these tunes, grooves, and bass lines. There is a good reason that musicians talk about certain bands, albums, or bassists. Continue your theory, reading and technique work. Investigate chord scales and modes. Learn all your key signatures (major and minor), scales, and chord arpeggios. Try to read all bass clef music and start to get familiar with the treble clef.

Develop your concept of what it means to play bass. Realize how important you are as a bassist in a band. You have a big responsibility, taking care of both the groove and the harmony. It is a powerful position.

Play bass every day, by yourself and with others, and get the sound in your body.

Keep the beat!

—Rich and John

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MUSIC/BASS/METHOD

Get Your Band Together

This is the first-ever method that teaches you how to play in a rock band. Learn what all the great musicians seem to know intuitively—how to listen, interact and respond, improvise, and become part of the groove. The book and play-along CD will help improve your timing, technique, and reading ability. Become the great player that everyone wants to have in their band.

Lessons throughout this book guide you through playing basic grooves, walking bass lines, and other standard bass techniques. Daily practice routines are designed for practicing by yourself or with other musicians. The accompanying CD features outstanding Berklee players and covers a variety of styles including rock, funk, jazz, blues, swing, and bossa nova.

Topics include:

- learning by ear
- theory and technique
- rhythmic interpretation
- improvisation
- comping
- reading
- song form
- interpreting lead sheets

This series coordinates methods for many different instruments, and all are based on the same tunes, in the same keys. If you know a guitarist, drummer, keyboardist, vocalist, horn player, etc., have them pick up the *Berklee Practice Method* for their own instrument, and jam together!

Berklee Practice Method is also available for:

- drum set
- guitar
- keyboard
- voice
- vibraphone
- alto sax
- tenor sax
- trombone
- trumpet
- violin

"The best way to launch your playing to the next level is by performing real tunes with seasoned musicians. This book/CD combo provides that kind of experience for aspiring bassists, along with a treasury of music-theory knowledge and practical insights."

Richard Johnston, Editor, *Bass Player* magazine

"By far the most informative book I've ever seen. Great for bassists of beginner or advanced stages. From tuning and holding the bass, to transposing and improvising bass lines, it covers everything. The way that the different bass styles are thoroughly broken down along with different practice tips is fantastic."

Christian McBride

"An effective way for you to read charts and play along with other musicians in a real-time playing environment. The book will keep your nose in the music and the CD will keep your ears open to the goings-on of the other musicians who are playing. Have fun, practice regularly, and enjoy this fine book."

Jeff Berlin

"True to the tradition of Berklee College of Music to thoroughly train students to be professional musicians, this method is a great workout. An excellent practice book covering many styles, which will help you learn the necessities of working in the rhythm section creatively."

Carol Kaye, Bass recording legend, Pioneer in authoring tutors for the electric bass, Educator at the Henry Mancini Institute-UCLA

"The Practice Method rules! It's a great way to learn riffs, latch onto some basic song structures, and see how tunes are put together. This lets you focus on playing in a band, and on creating your own interpretations in any style."

Joe Stump, Shred Guitar Master, Assistant Professor, Berklee College of Music

"Teachers are invaluable, practicing by yourself is critical, but performing in a band is the most valuable experience of all. That's what is so special about this series: it gives you the theory you need, but also prepares you to play in a band. This series will help you master the skills you need to become a creative, expressive, and supportive musician that anyone would want to have in their band."

Gary Burton, Executive Vice President, Berklee College of Music

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